



BIRTHRIGHT BETRAYED

By Sam Polak



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HOW TO PLAY

Pathfinder Society Scenario #9-08: Birthright Betrayed is a Pathfinder Society Scenario designed for 1st- through 5th-level characters (Tier 1-5; Subtiers 1-2 and 4-5). This scenario is designed for play in the Pathfinder Society Roleplaying Guild campaign, but can easily be adapted for use with any world. For more information on the Roleplaying Guild, how to read the attached Chronicle sheets, and how to find games in your area, check out the campaign's home page at paizo.com/pathfinderSociety.



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GM RESOURCES

Birthright Betrayed makes use of the *Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook*, *Pathfinder Advanced Class Guide* (ACG), *Pathfinder RPG Advanced Player's Guide* (APG), *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2*, and *Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Combat* (UC). All rules referenced in this adventure are available in the free online Pathfinder Reference Document at paizo.com/prd, which appear in full in the NPC's statistics. The relevant rules from the Bestiary volumes and statistics from the Codex books are reprinted at the back of the adventure for the GM's convenience.

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BIRTHRIGHT BETRAYED

By Sam Polak



Over several millennia, Taldor's armies united much of Avistan, and there are few places on the continent devoid of Taldan influence. With expanding borders came the need for new administrators, so as it annexed territory, the empire steadily awarded titles and resources to a growing noble class. Conquest was the fuel that fed the empire's expansion, and when that fire cooled, so too did the nobility retreat into their own insular and indulgent culture, decadent in defiance of their nation's decline. Without a doubt, there have been exceptions. Many Taldan politicians have endeavored to follow the principles of good governance, and it was even the empire's own General Arnisant who led the Inner Sea region's nations against the Whispering Tyrant during the Shining Crusade. Even these outstanding leaders have only slowed Taldor's gradual decline, though, and since the Even-Tongued Conquest of 4081 AR, all but the lands nearest its capital have seceded.

Taldor's government is a complex affair consisting of an ornate hierarchy of nobles and appointed senators led by the head of state, Grand Prince Stavian III. Traditionally, Taldor's Primogen Crown passes down to each ruler's eldest male heir, but Stavian III has only one daughter, Princess Eutropia. While Eutropia has grown frustrated with the empire's stagnation, Stavian has become increasingly paranoid and opposed to any perceived threats to his rule. Several sympathetic allies, including Lady Gloriana Morilla of the Sovereign Court faction, have quietly sided with Eutropia, and for many months they have been recruiting supporters in the senate in order to strike down the outdated practice of primogeniture, the appointment of only male heirs. The time for the vote approaches, and Princess Eutropia's cohort is desperately securing the last senators they need to guarantee a positive outcome.

Lady Gloriana Morilla has her eyes set on two senators from the Tandak prefecture, famous for its shipyards. First among these is Earl Calhadion Vernisant, who ostensibly oversees the lands surrounding Ridonport in conjunction with its baron. In truth, Vernisant spends far more energy promoting his own political career, using his direct ancestor

WHERE ON GOLARION?

Birthright Betrayed takes place in Ridonport, a town built on the only natural harbor along the portion of Taldor's coast known as the Jagged Saw. Its economy relies heavily on providing supplies to the Taldan Imperial Navy, which uses Ridonport as an overflow port given its proximity to the shipyards at Cassomir. More information on Ridonport, Taldor, and Tandak Prefecture appear in *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Taldor, The First Empire* and *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: The Inner Sea World Guide*. More information on Earl Calhadion Vernisant and Count Orlundo Zespire appear in *Pathfinder Adventure Path #127: Crownfall*.



General Arnisant as proof of his own superior breeding and talents. Lady Morilla has identified him as a steady supporter of Stavian III, yet Vernisant has made an enemy of another senator whom Morilla hopes to convince to aid Eutropia. This second senator is Count Orlundo Zespire, a military man whose admirable service record earned him a noble title and the duty of administering central Tandak. Count Zespire believes that his colleague Vernisant has begun hijacking shipments bound for Ridonport and blaming the losses on pirates, when in fact he suspects the earl is using the profits to line his pockets.



Under most circumstances, the Pathfinder Society would not become involved in Taldan politics. This time, though, their assistance could secure opportunities to study relics from the Shining Crusade, including many pieces associated with General Arnisant himself. All the Society needs to do is investigate the conflict between these two senators.

SUMMARY

The PCs travel to Ridonport to investigate an ongoing conflict between Earl Vernisant and Count Zespire, primarily as a favor so that the Society can later study the town's extensive collection of relics tied to the hero General Arnisant. The investigation first takes the PCs to the local museum, where the sympathetic caretaker suggests several public figures who represent Taldor's broad social classes and can provide further evidence of the earl's criminal ties. These clues identify an exclusive dockside club that caters to naval officers, lead the PCs to confront a crew of canal pirates smuggling stolen goods into Ridonport, and help the Pathfinders recover a stolen relic missing from the museum. Each of these implicates Earl Vernisant in a scheme to overcharge the navy for using Ridonport's harbor and steal from his neighboring noble colleagues.

Sensing trouble, Vernisant attempts a public display of his influence and heritage to discredit the investigators, and the PCs can debate him to determine the gathering crowd's mood and shape the course of events—likely to the earl's embarrassment. As a last ploy, Vernisant attempts a publicity stunt that inadvertently unleashes a horror from the Shining Crusade upon the PCs and the crowd.

GETTING STARTED

The PCs convene in Oppara at the clandestine lodge of Venture-Captain Muesello, who maintains his operation in the back rooms of a bait and tackle shop. His pockmarked face creases with concern as he nods to the PCs in greeting, checks outside, closes the door, and posts a "Gone Fishing" sign out front. From there, he ushers the PCs into a concealed room where Lady Gloriana Morilla waits in a chair near the fireplace.

Read or paraphrase the following to begin the adventure.

"I appreciate your answering my call," Venture-Captain Muesello says with a subdued smile as he closes the room's curtains and clears away an unfinished wayfinder to make space. "Some of you may already know Lady Gloriana Morilla, and I shall explain

why she's joined us momentarily. First, let us remember that General Arnisant, hero of the Shining Crusade, is one of the most highly regarded figures in Taldor's history. Arnisant's hometown of Ridonport has always been especially proud of him, and nearly nine centuries since his death, his home's still preserved as a museum. The Society regularly submits requests to the museum to examine the historical artifacts there. Usually we get a polite and curt 'no.' Most recently, though?"

Muesello tilts his head from side to side as if considering his words. "This time the curator, Cincia Reviamo, wrote that she cannot help because the local lord, Earl Calhaddon Vernisant, has been taking undue liberties with the museum and its collection—apparently taking whatever he wants from it, claiming he has the right because he's a direct descendant of General Arnisant. Taking priceless relics is one thing, but there's another angle that Lady Morilla can explain better."

Gloriana Morilla picks up where Muesello left off.

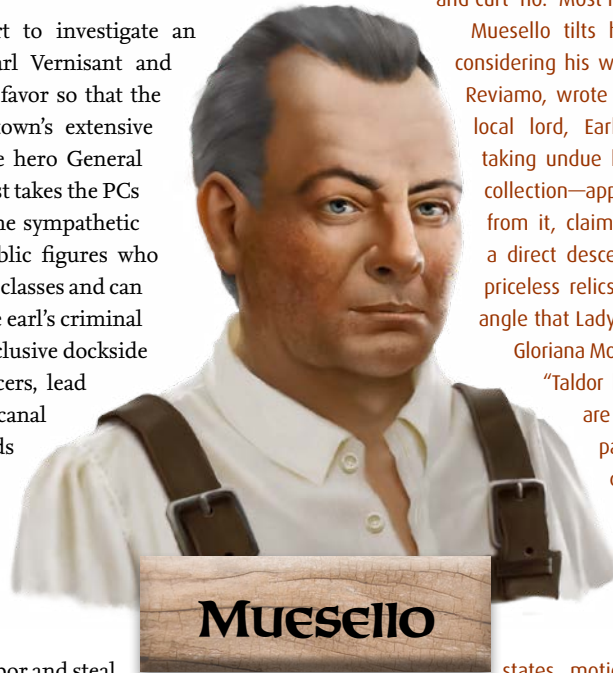
"Taldor has many great legacies, but there are some traditions better left in the past. The practice of primogeniture dictates that Taldor's crown only passes to male heirs, yet the laws have been amended over time to allow women to inherit land and titles in some circumstances.

"Even so, the Lion," Morilla states, motioning that the animal has special significance, "has no male heir and seems

utterly against his young Lioness leading the pride. It's a stubborn stance that could condemn Taldor to civil war. I have spoken to many senators who also believe it's time to update the empire's inheritance laws. The Lion and his loyalists view this growing equality movement as a personal attack, even a coup. Among these is the Earl Vernisant, who would readily vote against reform just to become part of the Lion's inner circle.

"Count Orlundo Zespire, however, is an undecided senator. Exports from his lands travel through Vernisant's region, yet along the way many of the goods go missing as a result of canal piracy. Zespire suspects his colleague is at least negligent in allowing these crimes to transpire in his town—and possibly worse. It seems this isn't the first misunderstanding between the two, and the count has informed me that he would be in the Lioness's debt were she able to arrange someone to resolve the matter. If that also involves finding evidence that ties Vernisant to criminal elements, making that evidence public would cause the earl considerable distress and bring the count considerable joy. Just keep in mind that no matter what evidence you find, you'll need to convince Ridonport's citizens to trust you before they'll take your word over that of General Arnisant's descendant."

Muesello clears his throat before adding, "Just to be clear, the Society's interest is in stopping Vernisant's relic-pilfering



and getting in the curator's good graces. It so happens that Lady Morilla's and the Society's aims overlap nicely. Visit the museum, talk to the curator, figure out how to protect the collection, and investigate the earl's alleged misdeeds. Any questions?"

With a successful DC 10 Intelligence, Knowledge (local), or Knowledge (nobility) check, a PC can intuit that the terms Lion and Lioness refer to Grand Prince Stavian III and Princess Eutropia respectively, and that Lady Morilla is using them for some combination of plausible deniability and thwarting divinations. Morilla candidly confirms this if asked, though she's cautious about naming either figure in this meeting. She even uses such an inquiry as an opportunity to caution the PCs about being circumspect as a matter of habit when discussing their plans.

The two answer any questions the PCs have.

What else can you tell us about General Arnisant? Lady Morilla explains. "Nearly nine hundred years ago, he and the Taldan army led a coalition that drove the Whispering Tyrant back to his fortress of Gallowspire and imprisoned him there. It was a victory many weren't sure was possible, and certainly a costly one. Among many others, General Arnisant never made it back to Ridonport. Of course Taldor remains very proud of his accomplishments and sacrifice."

Who is Count Orlundo Zespire? Lady Morilla notes, "Count Zespire was the third-born child of his noble family, which meant he had little chance to inherit anything of consequence. He instead entered Taldor's military and served in far-flung peacekeeping contingents with distinction, earning him his new title and lands when he returned home. By all reports, he has continue to serve Taldor honorably, and many soldiers still speak fondly of him as 'the Iron Gar,' a nickname he earned while combating outlaws in the River Kingdoms."

What if there's no evidence against Vernisant? Muesello responds. "While it's likely Vernisant's engaged in some trickery, don't fabricate evidence just to make him look bad. If there's something else behind the piracy, follow the leads and use your best judgment. If that's the case, though, you might need to find some other way of convincing the earl to stop exploiting the museum's collections."

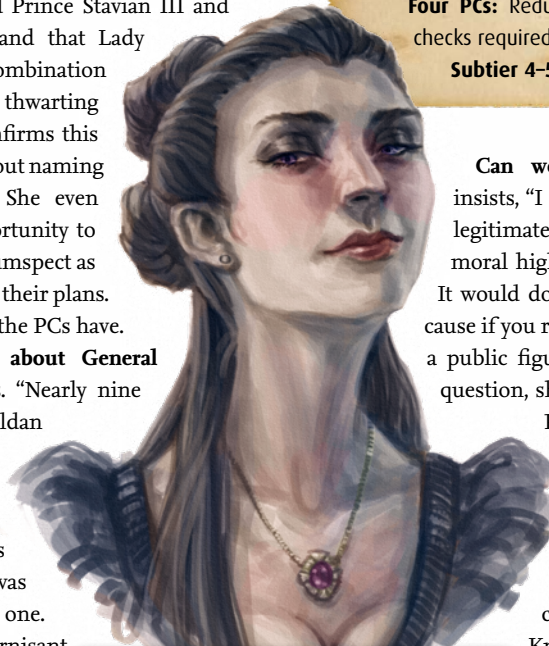
How should we publicize our evidence? Lady Morilla answers with a suggestion. "You'll be strangers making accusations, so the best approach would be to convince several upstanding members of the community to help spread the word."

Scaling Influence in Ridonport

The DCs and numbers of successes detailed in the first part of the adventure are for a group of 5–6 PCs in Subtier 1–2. Make the following cumulative adjustments for groups of different sizes and levels.

Four PCs: Reduce the number of successful skill checks required to influence an NPC by 1.

Subtier 4–5: Increase the skill check DCs by 2.



Lady Gloriana Morilla

Can we break any laws? Lady Morilla insists, "I want to stress that we must operate legitimately and within the law. We have the moral high ground and I trust you to hold it. It would do terrible and lasting damage to our cause if you resorted to, for example, assassinating a public figure." Even if the PCs don't ask this question, she conveys her insistence before the PCs depart.

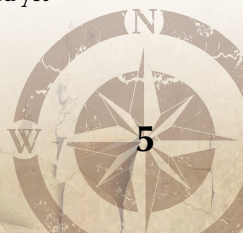
DIPLOMACY (GATHER INFORMATION) OR KNOWLEDGE (LOCAL)

Based on the result of a Diplomacy check to gather information or a Knowledge (local) check, the PCs might know more about Ridonport. They learn all of the information with a DC equal to or less than the result of their check. Furthermore, Lady Morilla can provide any of this information if asked directly.

10+: Ridonport is the sole natural harbor along the Jagged Saw, Taldor's rocky coastline that runs from Oppara to Cassomir. Those two large cities attract most of the ship traffic, leaving Ridonport to serve as a place to restock the navy.

15+: Tandak Prefecture's economy relies heavily on logging in the Verduran Forest, and generations of intensive farming have left the land largely unsuitable for most crops. Even so, the extensive canal system makes transporting goods to and from the coast fairly easy—or it would, if many of the secondary routes hadn't fallen into disrepair.

20+: Tandak Prefecture has suffered political turmoil ever since the previous grand duke Forath Bozbeyli was stripped of his title for having fabricated a heroic past. He was later torn to pieces by the prefecture's common people for having deceived them. Even though 7 years have passed since then, nobles in the area hope that this one violent incident was an exception, not a sign of future retaliation. The commoners tend to remember the incident with a mix of pride and chagrin, both embarrassed by the destruction they caused yet pleased at having overthrown a pompous buffoon.



GAINING INFLUENCE IN RIDONPORT

Through the first part of the PCs' investigation, they need to speak with a handful of Ridonport's prominent citizens from an array of Taldor's social classes. Not only can these citizens provide the PCs with some leads, but they can also lend their voices to sway public opinion when the PCs start making accusations against Earl Calhadion Vernisant (see the Earl Vernisant's Speech encounter on page 18).

This section describes four Ridonport personalities who, due to their careers or backgrounds, are poised to assist the PCs. Each NPC is initially skeptical about the investigation, and each has a few specific concerns that you can read or paraphrase to prompt the players. If the PCs don't address an NPC's concerns, she might still answer the PCs' questions while making it clear that she doesn't want to be personally involved in whatever the Pathfinders are doing; in other words, that NPC does not support the PCs later in the adventure. Each NPC's concerns and the skill checks required to influence these figures appear in a sidebar called "Influencing [NPC Name]" located near their respective encounters. You can also use **Handout #1** (see page 25) as a visual reference of what skills to use.

Although these four NPCs are the intended points of contact, particularly creative PCs can try to gain influence with other Ridonport inhabitants not detailed here by starting a whisper campaign, writing an insulting song, or similar strategies. This process requires two successful DC 14 skill checks (DC 16 in Subtier 4–5) of the GM's choice. Ideally, the GM should select two different skills, such as Perform to write the song and Diplomacy to convince a local performer to begin using it. Success earns the group a small bonus in the Earl Vernisant's Speech encounter later in this scenario, and the PCs can only earn a bonus in this way once.

Noble PCs: If a PC has a boon or vanity that grants him a noble title or knighthood (such as the Noble Title vanity from *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Pathfinder Society Field Guide*), he gains an advantage when influencing several of the key NPCs and a penalty when interacting with the shipwright Rasvelg. If the PC does not have such a boon but one of that player's other characters does, the latter can provide the PC with a notarized document declaring the PC the noble's agent. In this scenario, this conveys the same benefits and drawbacks as if the PCs had a noble title.

Development: The PCs' investigations point them to potential encounters at the chandlery (area A) and a canal bridge (area B). Once the PCs have spoken to the key NPCs and explored these locations, Earl Vernisant is aware that someone is sniffing around his dirty laundry and moves to counter the PCs' investigation. See the Checking In section on page 17.

Treasure: Each successfully influenced NPC also provides the PCs with a parting gift at the end of the adventure so long as the PCs complete the scenario. This scenario calculates

the value of this treasure as though the PCs received only one of these items, so when not using this adventure for Pathfinder Society Roleplaying Guild, consider awarding the PCs only one or two of these treasures.

If the PCs successfully influence Cincia, she gives them a *wand of daylight* (7 charges) in Subtier 1–2 or a *wand of remove curse* (4 charges; CL 12th) in Subtier 4–5. If the PCs successfully influence Rasvelg, he gives them an *all tools vest* (*Pathfinder Advanced Player's Guide* 300) in Subtier 1–2 or a set of *marvelous pigments* in Subtier 4–5. If the PCs successfully influence Joleana, she gives them a *brooch of shielding* in Subtier 1–2 or a *minor crown of blasting* in Subtier 4–5. If the PCs successfully influence Neffery, he gives them a set of *boots of gusto* (*Pathfinder RPG Advanced Class Guide* 227) in Subtier 1–2 or a *circlet of persuasion* in Subtier 4–5.

Rewards: If the PCs successfully influence only one or two of the key NPCs, reduce each PC's gold earned by the amount listed. If the PCs do not successfully influence any of the key NPCs, instead reduce their gold earned by the amount listed in parentheses. In addition, cross out the items associated with any NPC the PCs did not successfully influence.

Subtier 1–2: Reduce each PC's gold earned by 66 gp (or 133 gp).

Out-of-Subtier: Reduce each PC's gold earned by 158 gp (or 316 gp).

Subtier 4–5: Reduce each PC's gold earned by 250 gp (or 500 gp).

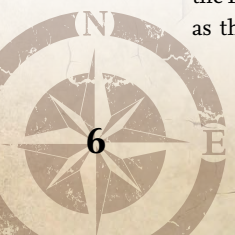
THE GENERAL ARNISANT MUSEUM AND HISTORICAL RESIDENCE

The journey by ship along the Jagged Saw and into Ridonport passes uneventfully. The museum is a short walk from the docks, where it stands surrounded by numerous old homes and within view of the 200-foot-tall statue of General Arnisant in the city's main square. The museum is a spacious, single-story stone house that has undergone dozens of renovations over the years. Even so, some parts look overdue for repairs.

The entrance opens to a large sitting room. The furnishings are aging, albeit clean and free of dust. The walls are crowded with portraits, framed letters, and genealogical charts. Several glass cases protect more fragile items, and at least a dozen of the pieces carry an aura of faint transmutation magic from the *unguent of timelessness* used to preserve them.

On the wall just to the right of the front doors hangs a 4-by-6-foot painting of Earl Calhadion Vernisant looking dramatically into the distance with the crown-and-lion standard of Taldor waving behind him. The painting is an animated portrait with an array of programmed interactions. As a result, the flag actually moves, and the painted earl nods stately at anyone PC who catches his eye. Programmed answers to common questions appear in the A Talkative Painting sidebar on page 7.

Once the PCs have had a few minutes to inspect the main gallery, the museum curator **Cincia Reviamo** (LG female



human expert/wizard) emerges from another room to greet them. Cincia is in her late twenties and has dark black curly hair, dark eyes, and an olive complexion. She wears reading glasses and occasionally walks with a cane due to chronic back pain. She's a dedicated professional who takes her job documenting Taldor's history seriously.

Cincia invites the PCs to sign a guest book while politely inquiring about what brings them to the museum. She's expecting a group of Pathfinders, so whether the PCs identify themselves outright or she makes that inference based on their attire or guest book entries, she realizes that the PCs' visit is about business. She explains that she's prepared several rooms for them to use while they're in Ridonport, which isn't something she normally does for visitors. She then explains her concerns.

"The museum owns the contents and operates mostly on donations, but that doesn't stop Earl Vernisant from treating it as his personal property. He sends his people to take anything he likes from the collection, but I almost prefer that to when he adds things. Have you met his painting? That's just one example, but there are more. Here we have the genealogy exhibit, which Vernisant commissioned when he found out that the mortal lomedae spent some time with General Arnisant during the Shining Crusade. The earl added this chart to the display, and it's the only document I've ever seen that suggests the Inheritor is one of his ancestors. That she and General Arnisant...then children...it's not even..." Cincia struggles to voice her dismay, finally settling for a frazzled groan that she ends with, "I have questions."

She motions to another display. "The mannequins—I managed to assemble four full sets of armor to represent Taldor's major armies in the Shining Crusade: the Phalanx, the Horse, the Navy, and the Knights of Ozem. Unfortunately, Vernisant learned that the Knight of Ozem's helmet is magical, so he had it relocated to his private collection for 'study.'

"If you want this museum to be a useful source of anything other than propaganda, we'll need to keep Vernisant away from it. So what are you going to do?"

Cincia is predisposed to work with the Pathfinders, but she's heard numerous stories that suggest the Society doesn't always handle delicate problems in an upstanding or discerning way. If the PCs are to secure Cincia's wholehearted support, they need to make a good impression. The

A talkative Painting

Earl Vernisant's animated portrait understands and can give self-promotional answers to a range of questions. A PC who interacts with the painting can attempt a DC 14 Sense Motive check (DC 18 in Subtier 4–5) to gain some insight into Vernisant's character. This insight provides a +2 bonus on that PC's skill checks made when interacting with Vernisant in person in the Earl Vernisant's Speech encounter later in the adventure.

Who are you? "I am Earl Calhaddon Vernisant, a member of the Taldan Senate, and a direct descendant of the famous General Arnisant, Hero of the Shining Crusade."

What do you know about General Arnisant?

"He sacrificed himself to defeat the Whispering Tyrant. Arnisant's blood flows through my veins, and like him I guard our Taldan heritage and traditions with pride."

What do you know about Ridonport?

"Ridonport is the home town of General Arnisant, the overflow harbor for the Taldan navy, and the most significant of Taldor's city's beyond Oppara and Cassomir."

What have you done for Ridonport?

"Under my guidance, the navy's usage of Ridonport harbor has increased dramatically, bringing much-needed funds back to our local economy."

How do you plan to vote? "Please direct detailed questions about senatorial business to my office in Oppara."

What do you think about Grand Prince Stavian III?

"Grand Prince Stavian III is a brilliant and strong leader and exactly the kind of man Taldor needs for an emperor."

What do you think about this museum? "On behalf of my ancestors, I sincerely hope you enjoy your visit to the General Arnisant museum and historic residence."

If a PC says something rude or insulting: "Your behavior is disappointing, but predictable. Try to represent yourselves with a little more dignity."



Influencing Cincia sidebar on page 8 details her primary concerns and the checks to influence her.

Development: Cincia suggests several leads, whether or not the PCs successfully influenced her. However, she does so only grudgingly if the PCs failed, and her concerns about the PCs' abilities and comportment means she avoids risking her neck any further for them. Read or paraphrase the following.



Influencing Cincia

The following are Cincia's primary reservations against supporting the Pathfinders publicly.

Respect: "Your venture-captain Muesello was very polite, but you must know the Pathfinders have a mixed reputation. How can I be sure you'll respect the historical significance of this collection?"

The Law: "I don't want the city guard knocking on the door asking if I know you. Promise you won't get me in trouble with the law."

Skills and Modifiers

Cincia is biased toward scholars, so characters who present themselves as upstanding academics gain a +2 bonus on checks to influence her. A PC who succeeds at a DC 13 Sense Motive check understands that showing (or feigning) interest in her work—or noticing subtle details in the museum's collection—help make a positive impression on Cincia. PCs who demonstrate outstanding efforts to address her concerns can gain a +2 bonus on skill checks to influence her.

Skills: To earn Cincia's full support, the PCs must succeed at two of the following skill checks before failing two such checks: DC 15 Bluff, DC 15 Diplomacy, or DC 12 Knowledge (geography, history, local, or nobility).

"If you're looking for evidence of Vernisant's misdeeds beyond his disrespect for history, I can recommend a few people you'd do well to meet. There's Rasvelg, the head of the shipwright's guild. You'll find him at the wharf most days. Patrician Neffery Adimare is a minor noble who owns the ship's chandlery that supplies the navy. He likes to sit in there and listen to the naval officers' stories. Joleana Tantriano is our senior magistrate. If you find out Vernisant's doing anything illegal, you can take it to her at the courthouse."

THE WHARF

Ridonport's wharf boasts numerous smokehouses, warehouses, dry docks, and more, though this is a relatively quaint operation compared to the busy docks and shipyards of Cassomir to the north. **Rasvelg Coalbraid** (N male human expert) is a tall and broad man in his early thirties. Despite being head of Ridonport's shipwright's guild, he dresses simply in a plain shirt, vest, and sturdy trousers. His work keeps him busy and has taught him to be wary of strangers who might waste his time—particularly now as he's assessing a dry-docked ship for overdue maintenance. Rasvelg also harbors a disdain for the Ulfen Guard (the grand prince's personal guards), a bias learned from his Ulfen father who believed the Ulfen Guard was a haven for criminals and

traitors against the linnorm kings of the north. In addition to Common, Rasvelg is fluent in his parents' native languages, Polyglot and Skald. See the Influencing Rasvelg sidebar on page 9.

Development: If the PCs successfully influence Rasvelg and discuss their investigation, he identifies a place where they might catch the canal pirates red-handed (see below). If the PCs fail to influence him but discuss their investigation, he provides this information as a way to get the PCs out of his way, adding "You didn't hear this from me." The PCs can try again to influence him, but his increasingly bad mood increases the DCs of these checks by 4. After a second failed attempt, he refuses to speak with the PCs further.

"There are some tunnels that crisscross Ridonport, used by smugglers in days past. Vernisant likes to say he drove crime out of Ridonport by sealing them up years ago, but I remember there's one tunnel that opens up underneath the Saint Lymirin Street Bridge over the main canal. I've also been told that barges with no lamps lit stop under the bridge late at night."

RIDONPORT COURTHOUSE

The PCs can find **Magistrate Joleana Tantriano** (LG female human cleric of Iomedae) at work in Ridonport's courthouse. Joleana is in her late sixties, and she proudly wears the symbol of Iomedae as part of the half-cloak that denotes her judicial role. As a magistrate, she's a part of Taldor's upper class, but in addition to her university education, she also served an extended military tour in Lastwall. In her career, Joleana has seen much of the best and worst that humanity has to offer. Her quick wit and sense of humor surprise those who expect stoicism. She's not entirely surprised if the PCs accuse Vernisant of criminal activity, but she's well aware of the challenges involved in investigating powerful nobles. The PCs need to make a positive impression to secure her assistance (see the Influencing Joleana sidebar on page 10).

Development: If the PCs fail to influence Joleana, they can try again once. However, their earlier attempt tries her patience, increasing the DC for the second set of skill checks by 4. If they fail again, she dismisses them and warns them not to disturb the peace in Ridonport.

If the PCs successfully influence Joleana, read or paraphrase the following.

"Of course I've heard rumors, but I can't build a case based on hearsay. That would change if someone brought me actual evidence. Now, if you're interested in bringing outlaws to justice, I can sign papers that would deputize you for a week, authorizing you to hunt and collect bounties on pirates in the Tandak canals."

If the PCs have additional questions about the canal pirates, Joleana can provide a few details.



“Obviously, no one’s caught the pirates yet, but we have a few suspects. Three local boys from villages on the Tandak plains were ejected from the navy a few months ago for theft. Around the same time, a midshipman by the name of Gayleigh Knar went on leave and never reported back. Knar was well known locally for her affinity for animals, and they say she had just brought back some fanged beast she purchased while at port in Osirion.”

The courthouse also holds Ridonport’s official genealogy records. The PCs can both confirm that Vernisant is a direct descendant of General Arnisant and that there’s no official record supporting Vernisant’s relation to Iomedae in any way.

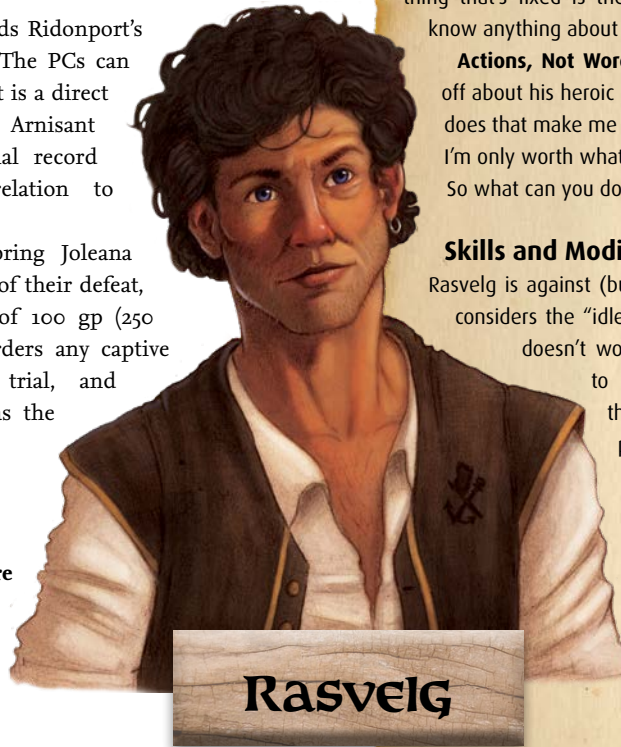
Rewards: If the PCs bring Joleana captive pirates or evidence of their defeat, she pays them a bounty of 100 gp (250 gp in Subtier 4–5). She orders any captive pirates jailed, pending trial, and confirms their identities as the suspected ex-midshipmen.

THE CHANDLERY (BUSINESS HOURS)

Patrician Neffery Adimare (LN male human aristocrat) spends much of the day relaxing at the ship chandlery (depicted in area A on page 10), a business dedicated to resupplying naval vessels. With little to occupy him beyond negotiating with suppliers, handling bookkeeping, and pouring the occasional drink, the patrician has plenty of time to keep his auburn whiskers carefully styled and sketch attractive doodles in the margins of his ledgers. Despite his family’s centuries-long aristocratic lineage, they’ve never been especially wealthy or influential. Even so, Neffery staunchly believes that supporting Ridonport is his duty, even to the point of occasionally overestimating the value of his contributions to the community.

Neffery’s been a little salty ever since Earl Calhadion Vernisant cheated him in a business deal, but he fears the consequences of doing anything about it—both for the sake of his own well-being and for Ridonport’s reputation. The PCs can convince him to risk some bad press for a chance to stop Vernisant from spoiling Ridonport (see the Influencing Neffery sidebar on page 11).

Development: If the PCs fail both checks to influence Neffery, they can make a second effort. However, their earlier attempt has left him feeling insulted, increasing the DC of this second set of skill checks by 4. If they fail again, he demands that they leave the chandlery, calling for the



INFLUENCING Rasvelg

The following are Rasvelg’s primary reservations against supporting the Pathfinders.

Behind Schedule: “I’m very busy working out how I’m going to repair this carrack without just building a whole new ship. These captains don’t come to me until the only thing that’s fixed is their budget. I don’t suppose you know anything about sailing or carpentry?”

Actions, Not Words: “Vernisant will talk your ear off about his heroic ancestry. Well, I’m half Ulfen, but does that make me a linnorm king? Unlike Vernisant, I’m only worth what I can do. I keep the ships afloat. So what can you do?”

Skills and Modifiers

Rasvelg is against (but tries to be polite to) what he considers the “idle nobility” and anyone else who doesn’t work for a living. PCs who appear to be such dilettantes, including those with a noble title or noble patron, take a –2 penalty on skill checks to influence Rasvelg. A PC who succeeds at a DC 10 Sense Motive check can discern that Rasvelg’s more impressed by those who can speak knowledgably about a skill or trade, particularly one related to his own area of expertise. Lending him a few hours of competent assistance or otherwise doing a particularly good job of allaying his concerns can drastically improve his opinion of the PCs, granting the PCs a +2 bonus on their checks to influence Rasvelg.

Skills: To earn Rasvelg’s full support, the PCs must succeed at two of the following skill checks before failing two such checks: DC 12 Craft, DC 16 Diplomacy, DC 13 Knowledge (engineering or local), or DC 12 Profession.

business’s enforcer in necessary (see Rusmonya Kusk on pages 11–13).

If the PCs address Neffery’s concerns and earn his support, he shares valuable news with the PCs. Read or paraphrase the following.

“The chandlery’s been in my family for generations, and we’ve always been proud to do our part supplying the navy. That’s how we got our title, back in the 4500’s. Well, when Vernisant took over for his father as the new earl a few years back, he approached me about a ‘silent partnership’ in the chandlery. As an earl, he outranks me by quite a bit, and I should have been



INFLUENCING JOLEANA

The following are Joleana's primary reservations against supporting the Pathfinders' investigation.

Reputation: "Vernisant and his family have been a pillar of this community for hundreds of years, so it's difficult to accept that he's abused his position."

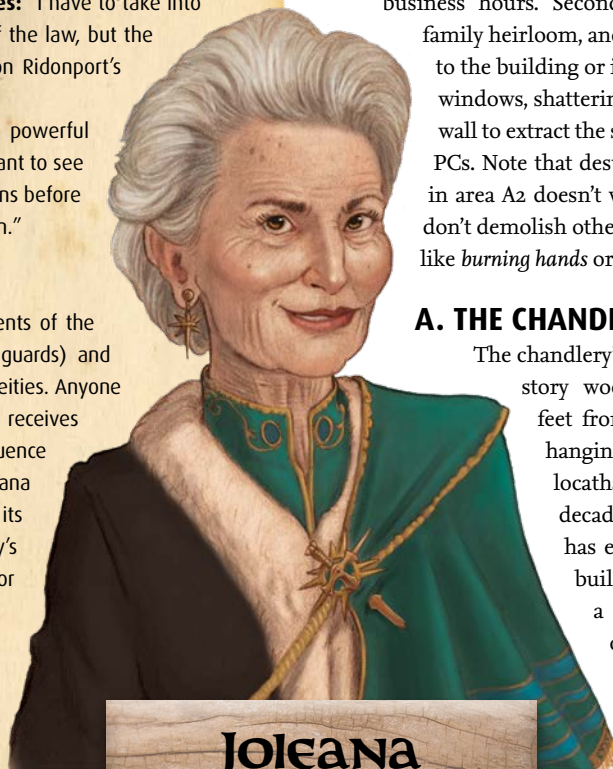
Community Consequences: "I have to take into account not just the letter of the law, but the effects of an investigation on Ridonport's long-term stability."

Evidence: "Prosecuting a powerful noble is always a risk, so I want to see some proof of your accusations before I start an official investigation."

Skills and Modifiers

Joleana is biased toward agents of the law (such as paladins and guards) and followers of good or lawful deities. Anyone who seems to fit that profile receives a +2 bonus on checks to influence her. Furthermore, Joleana respects the aristocracy and its duty to maintain a community's stability; PCs who are nobles or their direct agents gain a +2 bonus on checks to influence her. A PC who succeeds at a DC 13 Sense Motive check determines that arguments referencing Iomedae's historical deeds or specific legal knowledge are best suited to influencing the magistrate. Furthermore, she's impressed by anyone who can match her sharp and poignant humor, though doing so could be difficult (note the higher DC on the check).

Skills: To earn the magistrate Joleana's support, the PCs must succeed at two of the following skill checks before failing two such checks: DC 15 Diplomacy, DC 13 Knowledge (history or religion), DC 18 Perform (comedy), or DC 12 Profession (barrister).



**Joleana
Tantriano**

safe I had installed back there? If you think Vernisant's hiding something, that wall safe might be a good place to look."

Although Neffery is amenable to the PCs breaking in to recover evidence, he does require them to agree to several conditions before he's willing to look the other way. First, he wants the PCs to do so when he's not present, ideally after business hours. Second, the business is practically a family heirloom, and causing any significant damage to the building or its contents (e.g. messily breaking windows, shattering the door, or chopping into the wall to extract the safe) ends Neffery's support of the PCs. Note that destroying the construct guardian(s) in area A2 doesn't worry Neffery so long as the PCs don't demolish other contents with destructive spells like *burning hands* or *sound burst*.

A. THE CHANDLERY (AFTER HOURS)

The chandlery's main building is a long, single-story wooden building a few hundred feet from a stretch of docks. A shingle hanging by the front door displays a locathah hefting a barrel. Over its many decades of operation, the chandlery has expanded to encompass multiple buildings, and this one serves as a combination administrative office, sales floor, and watering hole where officers and quartermasters can review inventory and put in resupply orders over a glass of wine.

The chandlery has a front door facing the docks to the south and a back door facing an alley to the west.

Both exterior doors are good wooden doors, and are kept locked at night with average locks (hardness 5, hp 15, break DC 18, Disable Device DC 25). The back door is equipped with a mechanical alarm trap (see below). The interior doors are similar quality but only equipped with simple locks (Disable Device DC 20).

Alarm: If the night watchman Rusmonya (see area A1) sounds his whistle or if the door alarm (see area A2) sounds for more than 1 round, the PCs have only 2 minutes to explore before reinforcements arrive. These reinforcements consist of a pair of Vernisant's personal guards (use the same statistics as Rusmonya), but they attack with lethal force.

Clues: If the PCs met with Neffery Adimare here during the day and successfully influenced him, he has spent the intervening hours thinking about any other guidance he might provide. Hoping that Vernisant's the sentimental sort when choosing combinations, the patrician recorded some thoughts in his ledger's margins, which he's left open on the

more cautious. At first it sounded like Vernisant wanted to invest for patriotic reasons. Of course, before I knew it I was sunk deep in debt to him, and he'd transformed my father's favorite business into a private club for navy officers. They get liquored up enough when they're tromping through here that they barely notice how much the earl's hiked the prices—it's the people paying the tab, not the officers, so what should they care? Now I'm not even allowed in the back office. Did I mention there's a hidden wall

counter. If the PCs investigate, provide them **Handout #2**. The notes Neffery left reference General Arnisant's death 890 years ago; it is now 4717 AR, so a PC can either perform the arithmetic or succeed at a DC 12 Knowledge (history) check to know that date was 3827 AR.

The ledger lies open to pages that neatly illustrate Neffery's earlier claim about the chandlery overcharging the navy. With a successful DC 15 Appraise or Profession (merchant) check, a PC can ascertain that the warship *Zephyr Sign* has ordered similar quantities of supplies for the past 5 years, but the prices increase without explanation beginning about 10 months ago—shortly after Vernisant's takeover. Furthermore, the PC can notice that the origins of much of the purchased supplies becomes increasingly vague or absent altogether, whereas earlier much of these commodities appear to have come from Count Zespire's lands. A quick comparison of other pages shows similar price hikes and undocumented sources for most other vessels.

A1. MAIN ROOM (CR 1 OR CR 4)

The chandlery's main area is filled with tables and chairs, and a long counter stretches along the back wall. The room's decorations consist mostly of nautical gear in tasteful displays of rope, nails, marlinspikes, sailcloth, and more. Interspersed among these are symbols of Taldor's military campaigns, a few of which are replicas from the empire's legendary Armies of Exploration.

Creatures: The half-orc Rusmonya Kusk watches over the chandlery at night as a security guard, though he believes he's there more as a point of vanity than he is to deter burglars. He's been doing so for the past year as Vernisant has used the site to coordinate more of his illicit deals, though Rusmonya personally knows very little of these operations. Sometimes upper-class folks stop by at night to enter the back room after flashing credentials or having been introduced earlier as approved visitors. Beyond that, he knows about the construct guardian(s) in the back room, but he doesn't know about the safe or its combination.

Rusmonya spends most of his shift sitting at the table opposite the front door, where he can see both ends of the room. A PC can sneak past him with a successful DC 17 Stealth check (DC 20 in Subtier 4–5), decreasing the DC by 1 for each 10 feet away the PC is. The interiors of both rooms are dark, which doesn't trouble the half-orc at all. If he hears a loud

INFLUENCING NEFFERY

The following are Neffery's primary reservations against supporting the Pathfinders.

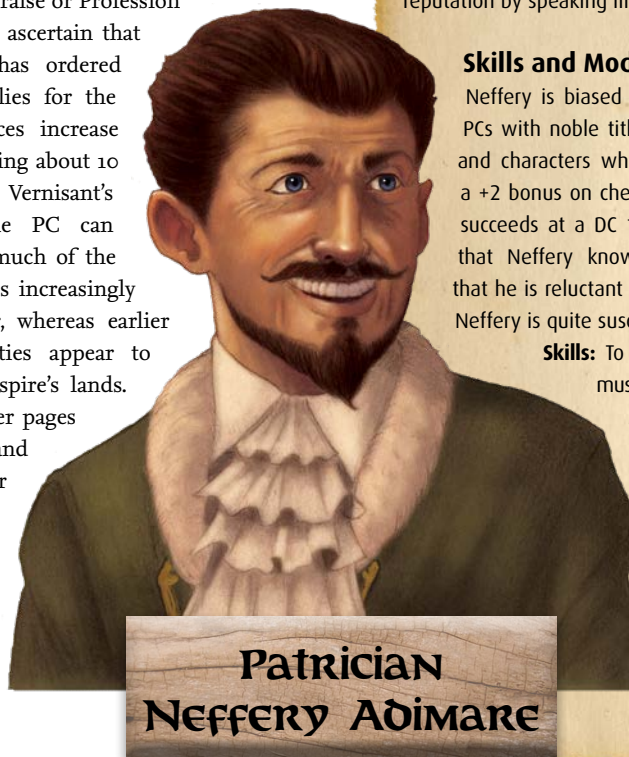
Fear: "Vernisant certainly has a lot of sway around here."

Pride: "I'm a patriotic Taldan, and Ridonport is the birthplace of heroes! I'd hate to darken the town's reputation by speaking ill of anyone."

Skills and Modifiers

Neffery is biased toward other nobles (including PCs with noble titles and their notarized agents), and characters who seem to fit that profile gain a +2 bonus on checks to influence him. A PC who succeeds at a DC 13 Sense Motive check realizes that Neffery knows something about Vernisant that he is reluctant to share. The PC also notes that Neffery is quite susceptible to flattery.

Skills: To earn Neffery's support, the PCs must succeed at two of the following skill checks before failing two such checks: DC 12 Bluff, DC 16 Diplomacy, or DC 12 Knowledge (nobility). A PC who notices his sketches (Perception DC 15) can also attempt a DC 12 Craft check associated with drawing or penmanship in place of one of these checks to compliment Neffery's drawings.



Patrician
Neffery Adimare

noise, such as glass breaking, he takes a quick look around the main room before unlocking the back room to check there. However, he's not in a hurry, and it takes him 2 rounds to walk there and open the door.

If he hears a knock on the front door, Rusmonya goes to answer it. A PC can convince him to allow her inside without serious objections if she succeeds at a DC 18 Bluff check or a DC 23 Diplomacy or Intimidate check (increased to DCs 20 and 25, respectively, in Subtier 4–5). Any PC who is a noble, is a notarized noble's agent, or succeeds at a DC 20 Disguise check to play the part gains a +4 bonus on these checks to gain entrance; the half-orc has concerns about allowing in unauthorized people, but all of the authorized visitors so far have been upper class.

SUBTIER 1–2 (CR 1)

RUSMONYA KUSK

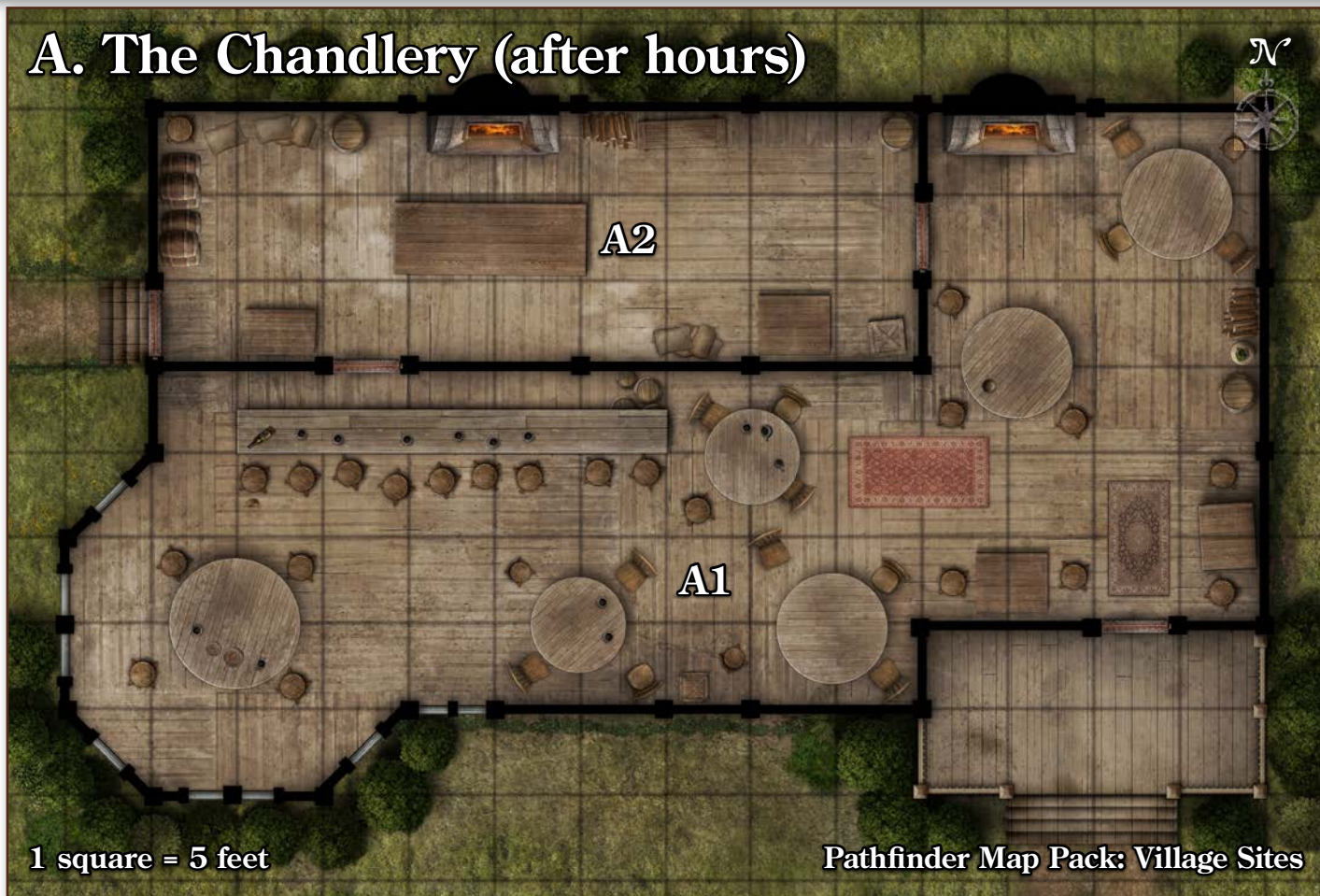
CR 1

Half-orc barbarian 2

N Medium humanoid (human, orc)



A. The Chandlery (after hours)



1 square = 5 feet

Pathfinder Map Pack: Village Sites

Scaling Encounter A1

If the group consists of only four PCs, Rusmonya has had an exceptionally good day and is singing quietly to himself. This reduces the DC of all Bluff, Diplomacy, Intimidate, Sleight of Hand, and Stealth checks made to affect, avoid, or steal from Rusmonya by 2.

Init +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +7

DEFENSE

AC 15, touch 11, flat-footed 14 (+4 armor, +1 Dex)

hp 22 (2d12+4)

Fort +5, **Ref** +1, **Will** +2

Defensive Abilities orc ferocity, uncanny dodge

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.

Melee club +4 (1d6+3) or
sap +4 (1d6+2 nonlethal)

Special Attacks rage (8 rounds/day), rage power
(intimidating glare)

TACTICS

During Combat Rusmonya blows his whistle and uses a combination of nonlethal attacks and sneezing powder to

incapacitate his foes. If he feels that he's in serious danger, he uses his rage ability and begins using lethal attacks.

Morale Rusmonya is a professional; he stops fighting if the PCs call for a truce unless he is raging. If his foes try to abuse this cease-fire, he doesn't entertain further offers to surrender.

STATISTICS

Str 15, **Dex** 13, **Con** 14, **Int** 10, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 8

Base Atk +2; **CMB** +4; **CMD** 15

Feats Improved Initiative

Skills Acrobatics +4 (+8 when jumping), Climb +5, Intimidate +6, Perception +7, Sense Motive +4; **Racial Modifiers** +2 Intimidate

Languages Common, Orc

SQ fast movement, orc blood

Combat Gear *potion of cure light wounds*, sneezing powder^{APG} (3);

Other Gear chain shirt, club, sap, signal whistle, keys for area A

SUBTIER 4-5 (CR 4)

RUSMONYA KUSK

CR 4

Half-orc barbarian 5

N Medium humanoid (human, orc)

Init +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +10

DEFENSE

AC 15, touch 11, flat-footed 14 (+4 armor, +1 Dex)

hp 48 (5d12+10)

Fort +7, **Ref** +3, **Will** +4

Defensive Abilities improved uncanny dodge, orc ferocity, trap sense +1

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.

Melee +1 *heavy mace* +9 (1d8+5) or
sap +8 (1d6+3 nonlethal)

Special Attacks rage (14 rounds/day), rage powers (intimidating glare, quick reflexes)

TACTICS

During Combat When faced with only a few foes, Rusmonya activates his *feather token* (whip) to grapple one of his enemies. He then blows his whistle and uses a combination of nonlethal attacks and sneezing powder to incapacitate his foes. Faced with one foe, he focuses on nonlethal attacks. Against many foes, he adapts to whatever strategy he thinks is best. If he feels that he's in serious danger, he uses his rage ability and begins using lethal attacks.

Morale Rusmonya is a professional; he stops fighting if the PCs call for a truce unless he is raging. If his foes try to abuse this cease-fire, he doesn't entertain further offers to surrender.

STATISTICS

Str 16, **Dex** 13, **Con** 14, **Int** 10, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 8

Base Atk +5; **CMB** +8; **CMD** 19

Feats Cleave, Improved Initiative, Power Attack

Skills Acrobatics +7 (+11 when jumping), Climb +9, Intimidate +9, Perception +10, Sense Motive +7; **Racial Modifiers** +2 Intimidate

Languages Common, Orc

SQ fast movement, orc blood

Combat Gear *feather token* (whip), *potion of cure serious wounds*, sneezing powder^{APG} (3); **Other Gear** chain shirt, +1 *heavy mace*, sap, *cloak of resistance* +1, signal whistle, keys for area A

Development: Record whether the PCs used violence to subdue Rusmonya, fought the guard reinforcements, killed anyone here, or triggered the alarm. Likewise, if the PCs performed a very clean infiltration (even one in which they verbally tricked or cajoled Rusmonya), make a note. These play a role later in the adventure.

A2. BACK OFFICE (CR 2 OR CR 5)

Like the front room, the back office is decorated with a nautical theme. A shelf along the south wall holds a collection of ships in bottles and other sailing collectables decorated in the Taldor's blue and green shades. A desk stands in the middle of the room, and on the wall behind it is a glass-fronted shadow box containing a replica of the shattered *Shield of Aroden*, the legendary shield that saved General Arnisant's life.

Ever since Vernisant coerced Neffery Adimare into a bad deal, the earl has used this office as a private space for his

Scaling Encounter A2

For a group of only four PCs, the ship (or ships in Subtier 4–5) has already shattered its bottle from an earlier confrontation, removing its shatter spray ability.

rotating team of co-conspirators and barristers to concoct more ways to support the earl's machinations. The office's defenses would be absurd for a less sensitive operation. Most of the files are in a wall safe hidden behind a painting of General Arnisant effortlessly fending off ghouls, and one or more animate ships in a bottle rest on the southern shelf. While the guard Rusmonya is on site at night (see area A1), he lives only a short distance away and can assist during the day within a few minutes.

Creatures: Hidden among the collectables is an animate ship in a bottle (or two in Subtier 4–5) crewed by miniscule water elementals tasked with guarding this room. The ship doesn't attack any of the chandlery's regular employees (including Rusmonya and Neffery) or the few authorized agents of Vernisant, but a PC can fool the ship(s) with a successful DC 15 Disguise check to imitate one of the approved visitors. Likewise, the ships find any signs of an invisible intruder troubling but do not attack unless there's an obvious target.

Trap: The back door is set with a mechanical alarm. If not disabled, it rings a loud alarm bell for a full minute before the spring loses tension and the alarm stops.

SUBTIER 1–2 (CR 2)

ALARM BELL TRAP

CR 1

Type mechanical; **Perception** DC 20; **Disable Device** DC 20

EFFECTS

Trigger touch (opening the door); **Reset** manual

Effect alarm bell audible for half a mile rings for 1 minute

THE PRECURSOR

CR 2

Ship in a bottle (*Pathfinder Adventure Path #57: Tempest Rising* 86; see page 26)

hp 16

SUBTIER 4–5 (CR 5)

ALARM BELL TRAP

CR 1

Use the statistics from Subtier 1–2

THE PRECURSOR AND THE SUCCESSOR

CR 3

Advanced ships in a bottle (*Pathfinder Adventure Path #57: Tempest Rising* 86)

N Tiny construct

Init +8; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; **Perception** +1



DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 16, flat-footed 14 (+2 armor, +4 Dex, +2 size)

hp 27 (5d10)

Fort +1, **Ref** +5, **Will** +2

DR 5/bludgeoning; **Immune** construct traits

OFFENSE

Speed fly 40 ft. (perfect)

Melee ram +9 (1d3+3)

Ranged 2 ballistae +11 (1d6/19–20)

STATISTICS

Str 14, **Dex** 19, **Con** —, **Int** 5, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 13

Base Atk +5; **CMB** +5; **CMD** 19 (can't be tripped)

Feats Flyby Attack, Improved Initiative, Point-Blank Shot

Skills Fly +24

Languages Aquan and Common (can't speak)

SQ advanced construction, shatter spray

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Shatter Spray (Ex) The first time a ship in a bottle fires its ballista, rams a creature, or is dealt weapon damage, the bottle containing it shatters, spraying glass in a circle around it. All creatures in a 5-foot radius take 2d6 points of piercing damage. A successful DC 14 Reflex save halves this additional damage.

Treasure: There's fairly little of value to the PCs lying out in the open other than a sea lion statuette bearing a *pearl of power* (1st level). In Subtier 4–5 there is instead a *horn of freezing fog*, which functions as a *horn of fog* that once per day can chill its created fog to deal 1 point of cold damage to each creature that enters the fog or starts its turn in the affected area for the first minute after using the horn.

The more important find is the shallow safe, which is hidden (DC 20 Perception) along the west wall behind a removable wall panel that's further covered by a medium painting that depicts two Taldan ships at anchor as a landing party of armored soldiers pulls a boat onto a beach and an over-dressed Taldan nobleman plants a flag into the sand. A four-digit combination lock secures the safe (hardness 10, hp 10, break DC 25), to which the proper combination is 3827, the year of General Arnisan's heroic and fatal stand against the Whispering Tyrant. If the PCs have not discerned the combination with Neffery's help, they can try to crack the safe (Disable Device DC 30) or just shatter it.

Within the safe are two important documents. The first is a ledger that records a long series of payments vaguely labeled as "gifts" to various naval officers, spanning the course of a year. The second is the deed to the chandlery, showing ownership officially transferred to Earl Vernisant over a year ago.

Rewards: If the PCs do not find and open the safe, reduce each PC's gold earned as follows.

Subtier 1–2: Reduce each PC's gold earned by 110 gp.

Out-of-Subtier: Reduce each PC's gold earned by 258 gp.

Subtier 4–5: Reduce each PC's gold earned by 407 gp.

B. ST. LYMIRIN STREET BRIDGE (CR 3 OR CR 6)

The PCs can learn about the smuggling and piracy that happens near the St. Lymirin Street Bridge (about a 45-minute walk away from the museum) from the shipwright Rasvelg Coalbraid (see page 8). With this knowledge, they can coordinate their approach for when the canal pirates are unloading stolen cargo. Unless the PCs try to trick the pirates into docking here at a different time (such as by spreading misinformation about guard activity), this encounter takes place at night with a waxing moon, providing dim light.

Where Saint Lymirin Street meets the main canal into Ridonport, a weathered stone bridge arches over the murky shipping lane. Fifteen feet below, in the bridge's shadow, a long canal barge is tied up in the still water.

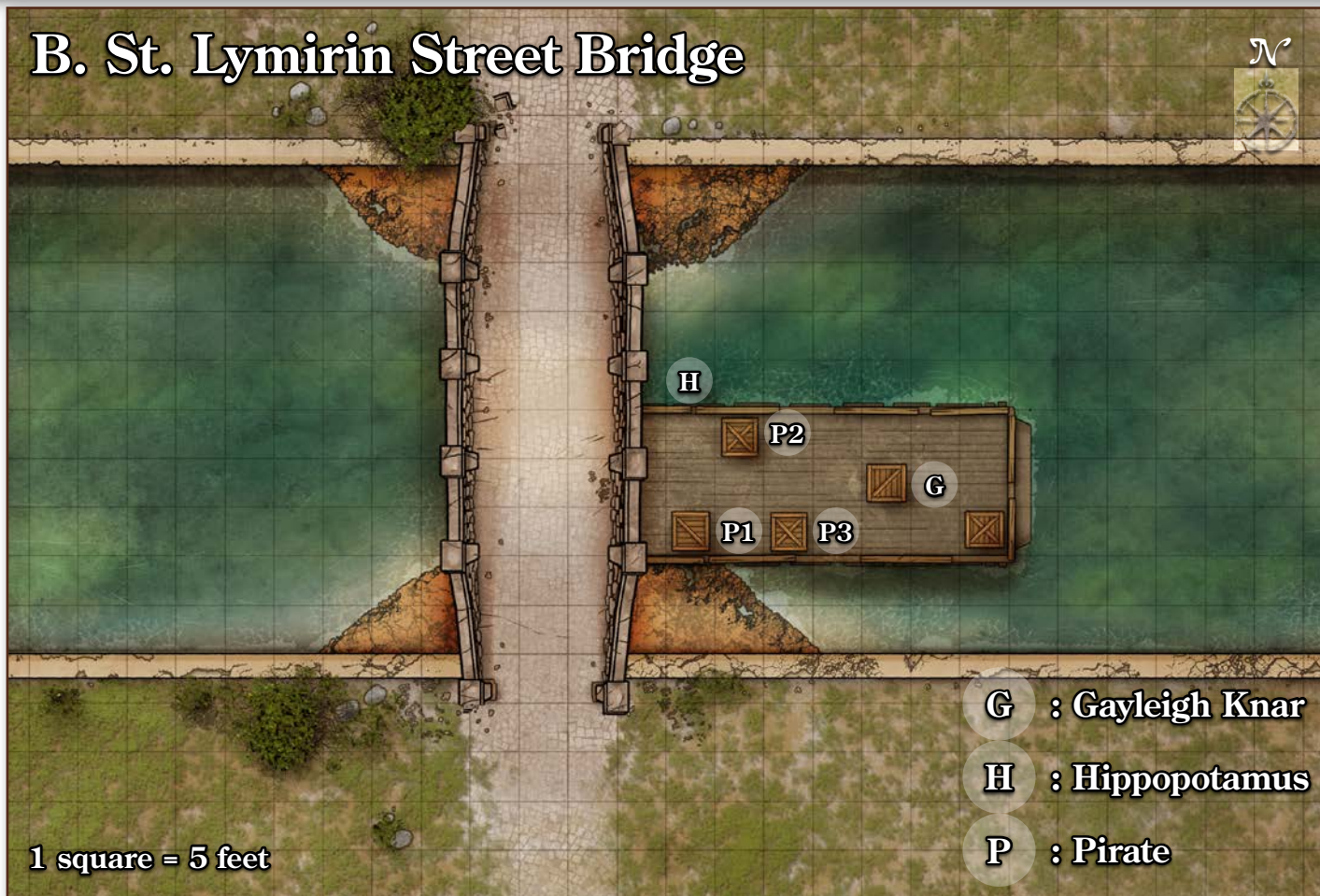
Even though this canal is in better repair than many of the ones further inland, it's still well overdue for a proper dredging. Sediment has piled up around the bridge's supports, creating miniature beaches. The pirates use these as convenient landing places to unload cargo and reach the 5-foot-wide tunnels that depart to the north and south before veering west toward various parts of greater Ridonport. The barge is a simple, 40-foot-long vessel with an iron lantern post at the center of its bow and stern. From each hangs a lit hooded lantern that's closed to avoid attracting attention. As a move action, an adjacent creature can flip open the lantern, shedding normal light in a 60-foot radius.

Creatures: Four pirates are busily unloading stolen cargo to the south tunnel. A PC who succeeds at a DC 10 Knowledge (local) or DC 15 Perception check (with a –1 penalty per 10 feet of distance) notices that the pirates are all wearing components of the imperial navy's uniform, such as the standard issue jackets, trousers, or the like—remnants of their naval careers that terminated when they were dishonorably discharged. If the PCs approach stealthily, they can overhear the pirates softly joking that they now steal more from the Iron Gar (referring to Count Orlundo Zespire) than they did before he got them discharged.

Among these is Gayleigh Knar, the group's leader. She's an accomplished marine with an inexplicable animal affinity, and she spent most of her savings to purchase an adolescent hippopotamus named Hypatria while in Osirion. With little money, a ruined career, and a fast-growing animal companion able to halt a barge, she turned to piracy. Her team's been receiving payment for their spoils from an unidentified patron, though the pirate Carlo's deduced that it's likely Earl Vernisant paying the bills. Hypatria spends most of her time in the canal's silt-laden water, which hides her quite effectively.

Hazard: It's difficult for the hippopotamus to clamber onto the barge, yet she can do so as a move action. This shakes the barge until the beginning of her next turn, causing all creatures to treat the barge as difficult terrain.

B. St. Lymirin Street Bridge



SUBTIER 1-2 (CR 3)

GAYLEIGH KNAR

CR 1/2

Female human hunter 1 (*Pathfinder RPG Advanced Class Guide* 26)

NE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +3; **Senses** Perception +5

DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 13, flat-footed 13 (+3 armor, +3 Dex)

hp 11 (1d8+3)

Fort +5, **Ref** +6, **Will** +2

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee short sword +1 (1d6+1/19-20)

Ranged longbow +3 (1d8/x3)

Hunter Spells Known (CL 1st; concentration +2)

1st (2/day)—*produce flame*, *resist energy*, *summon nature's ally I*

0 (at will)—*flare* (DC 11), *light*, *purify food and drink* (DC 11), *stabilize*

TACTICS

Before Combat Gayleigh is proud of her hippo's powerful bite and maintains the aspect of the bull on Hypatria most of the time.

During Combat Gayleigh activates her aspect of the tiger and uses Rapid Shot to fell ranged opponents. If her enemies are

Scaling Encounter B

To accommodate a group of four PCs, remove one of the river pirates—either Carlo, Dalan, or Robin—from the encounter.

concealed in darkness, she uses her aspect of the bat to gain darkvision. She casts spells as necessary to gain an advantage.

Morale The pirates have no desire to fight to the death. If the PCs offer the opportunity to surrender after two of the pirates have been knocked unconscious or killed, the rest hold their attacks and attempt to negotiate.

STATISTICS

Str 12, **Dex** 17, **Con** 14, **Int** 8, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +0; **CMB** +1; **CMD** 14

Feats Point-Blank Shot, Rapid Shot

Skills Acrobatics +3, Bluff +1, Handle Animal +4, Perception +5, Survival +5, Swim +4

Languages Common

SQ animal companion (hippopotamus named Hypatria), animal focus (1 minute/day), nature training, wild empathy +1

Combat Gear +1 arrows (4); **Other Gear** studded leather, longbow with 20 arrows, short sword, *helm of Ozem* (grants a +1 resistance on saving throws), 95 gp



HYPATRIA

CR —

Female hippopotamus (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 157)

N Medium animal

Init +1; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; Perception +1

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 11, flat-footed 16 (+1 Dex, +6 natural)

hp 11 (2d8+2)

Fort +4, **Ref** +4, **Will** +1; +2 bonus vs. nonmagical disease

Defensive Abilities sweat

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.

Melee bite +3 (1d8+1)

STATISTICS

Str 13, **Dex** 12, **Con** 12, **Int** 2, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 5

Base Atk +1; **CMB** +2; **CMD** 13 (17 vs. trip)

Feats Weapon Focus (bite)

Skills Acrobatics +1 (+5 when jumping), Stealth +5, Swim +5

SQ animal focus, tricks (attack, come, defend, down, guard, heel, stay)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Sweat (Ex) A hippo's reddish sweat protects it from nonlethal damage from hot environments, granting it a +2 racial bonus on saving throws against nonmagical disease.

CARLO, DALAN, AND ROBIN

CR 1/2

Human fighters 1

NE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +1; **Senses** Perception +1

DEFENSE

AC 14, touch 11, flat-footed 13 (+3 armor, +1 Dex)

hp 13 each (1d10+3)

Fort +5, **Ref** +1, **Will** +0

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee rapier +3 (1d6+2/18–20) or
dagger +3 (1d4+2/19–20)

Ranged light crossbow +2 (1d8/19–20)

TACTICS

During Combat The pirates drop their cargo and ready either their crossbows or their swords and bucklers. They team up on their enemies and use Dirty Trick maneuvers to blind foes by pulling their own cloaks, hats, or shirts over their heads.

Morale The pirates have no desire to fight to the death. If the PCs offer the opportunity to surrender after two of the pirates have been knocked unconscious or killed, the rest hold their attacks and attempt to negotiate.

STATISTICS

Str 15, **Dex** 12, **Con** 16, **Int** 13, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 8

Base Atk +1; **CMB** +3 (+5 dirty trick); **CMD** 14 (16 vs. dirty trick)

Feats Combat Expertise, Coordinated Maneuvers^{APG}, Improved Dirty Trick^{APG}

Skills Acrobatics +1, Intimidate +3, Perception +1, Profession (sailor) +4, Swim +5

Languages Common, Kelish

Combat Gear *potion of cure light wounds*, acid; **Other Gear** studded leather, buckler, dagger, light crossbow with 10 bolts, rapier, 42 gp

SUBTIER 4–5 (CR 6)

GAYLEIGH KNAR

CR 4

Female human hunter 5 (*Pathfinder RPG Advanced Class Guide* 26)

NE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +4; **Senses** Perception +9

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 14, flat-footed 14 (+4 armor, +4 Dex)

hp 41 (5d8+15)

Fort +7, **Ref** +9, **Will** +3

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee short sword +4 (1d6+1/19–20)

Ranged mwk composite longbow +9 (1d8+1/×3)

Hunter Spells Known (CL 5th; concentration +6)

2nd (2/day)—*barkskin*, *communal water walk*^{UC}, *hold animal* (DC 13), *summon nature's ally II*

1st (5/day)—*charm animal* (DC 12), *hydraulic push*^{APG}, *produce flame*, *resist energy*, *summon nature's ally I*

0 (at will)—*create water*, *detect magic*, *flare* (DC 11), *light*, *purify food and drink* (DC 11), *stabilize*

TACTICS

Use the tactics in Subtier 1–2.

STATISTICS

Str 12, **Dex** 18, **Con** 14, **Int** 8, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +4; **CMD** 18

Feats Coordinated Shot^{ACG}, Deadly Aim, Point-Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Weapon Focus (longbow)

Skills Acrobatics +9, Bluff +5, Handle Animal +8, Perception +9, Survival +9, Swim +9

Languages Common

SQ animal companion (hippopotamus named Hypatria), animal focus (5 minutes/day), hunter tactics, improved empathic link, nature training, track +2, wild empathy +5, woodland stride

Combat Gear +1 *shock arrows* (10); **Other Gear** +1 *studded leather*, mwk composite longbow (+1 Str) with 20 arrows, short sword, *helm of Ozem* (grants a +1 resistance on saving throws), 4 gp

HYPATRIA

CR —

Female hippopotamus (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 157)

N Medium animal

Init +2; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; Perception +1

DEFENSE

AC 20, touch 12, flat-footed 18 (+2 Dex, +8 natural)

hp 32 (5d8+10)

Fort +5, **Ref** +6, **Will** +2; +2 bonus vs. nonmagical disease

Defensive Abilities evasion, sweat

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.

Melee bite +6 (1d8+3)

STATISTICS

Str 14, **Dex** 14, **Con** 12, **Int** 2, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 5

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +5; **CMD** 17 (21 vs. trip)

Feats Combat Reflexes, Coordinated Shot^{ACG}, Toughness, Weapon Focus (bite)

Skills Stealth +8, Swim +7

SQ animal focus, tricks (attack, come, defend, down, guard, heel, seek, stay)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Sweat (Ex) A hippo's reddish sweat protects it from nonlethal damage from hot environments, and grants it a +2 racial bonus on saving throws against nonmagical disease.

CARLO, DALAN, AND ROBIN

CR 2

Human fighters 3

NE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +1; **Senses** Perception +3

DEFENSE

AC 14, touch 11, flat-footed 13 (+3 armor, +1 Dex)

hp 30 each (3d10+9)

Fort +6, **Ref** +2, **Will** +1 (+1 vs. fear)

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee mwk rapier +7 (1d6+2/18-20) or dagger +5 (1d4+2/19-20)

Ranged light crossbow +4 (1d8/19-20)

TACTICS

Use the tactics in Subtier 1-2.

STATISTICS

Str 15, **Dex** 12, **Con** 16, **Int** 13, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 8

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +5 (+7 dirty trick); **CMD** 16 (18 vs. dirty trick)

Feats Combat Expertise, Coordinated Maneuvers^{APG}, Gang Up^{APG}, Improved Dirty Trick^{APG}, Weapon Focus (rapier)

Skills Acrobatics +4, Intimidate +5, Perception +3, Profession (sailor) +6, Swim +8

Languages Common, Kelish

SQ armor training 1

Combat Gear *potion of cure light wounds*, acid; **Other Gear** mwk studded leather, buckler, dagger, light crossbow with 10 bolts, mwk rapier, 52 gp

Treasure: Gayleigh wears a winged helmet that bears the symbol of Aroden's eye, and this helm matches the description of the one Vernisant had removed from the museum. If the PCs bring it to her, Cincia confirms it's the missing helmet. If questioned about the helmet, the pirates explain it was left in the tunnel as part of their payment 2 weeks ago.

In addition to their equipment, the pirates' barge and the smuggler's tunnel are loaded with casks of salt pork. Each barrel bears a scratched-out maker's mark, and with a

successful DC 10 Appraise or DC 15 Perception check, a PC can discern that the central device in this maker's mark is a scaly gar, which also features prominently in Count Zespire's coat of arms.

Development: The pirates would rather submit to questioning than die fighting, particularly if doing so might win them some leniency with the law. They can explain that they began robbing Count Zespire's shipments as revenge for being dismissed from the navy. They worked with a fence and contact in Ridonport on a need-to-know basis, and that person arranged to use these tunnels as a dead drop location. The fence has since disappeared, yet the payments for good have kept appearing—even becoming more generous, including arms and armor instead of just coinage. Even though they haven't heard from their fence directly, the pirates have continued robbing Zespire's barges.

The pirates can also speculate about who's really been paying them the whole time. Carlo, sagely citing political stories his second cousin in Oppara has relayed during her training as a senatorial aide, remains convinced that Earl Vernisant is behind the scheme. With a successful DC 10 Profession (barrister) check or DC 15 Sense Motive check, a PC can determine that regardless of whether Carlo's claim is accurate, it's speculation that would never hold up without more evidence. If Carlo is unable to provide his theory, one of the surviving pirates can convey the story.

Unless the PCs are utterly irresponsible in how they transport captured pirates, their captives don't try to escape.

Rewards: If the PCs do not defeat the river pirates, reduce each PC's gold earned as follows.

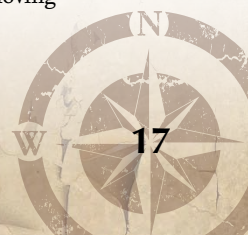
Subtier 1-2: Reduce each PC's gold earned by 115 gp.

Out-of-Subtier: Reduce each PC's gold earned by 287 gp.

Subtier 4-5: Reduce each PC's gold earned by 459 gp.

CHECKING IN

Once the PCs have spoken with the key NPCs, investigated the chandlery (area A), and thwarted the river pirates (area B), Earl Vernisant has learned of the PCs' meddling; this can also occur once the players decide they've performed enough investigation (or have irreparably failed at some of these tasks) and are ready to move forward with the story. Rather than attack the PCs directly, Vernisant tries to drum up the popular support to distract Ridonport from the PCs' imminent allegations. This takes place within 24 hours of the PCs finishing their earlier encounters, giving the characters a chance to check in with key NPCs to validate any of their findings, collect bounties, or deliver arrested pirates. All of the key NPCs find these developments grim, and Joleana Tantriano in particular assures the PCs that she'll begin drafting formal documentation soon. Whichever way the PCs approach this intermission, it should be clear that the PCs' allies need a little time to assemble their case before moving against the earl—enough time for the PCs to rest.



C. BIRTHRIGHT DAY CELEBRATION

If the PCs sleep in the museum, Cincia knocks on their respective doors as they're finishing their morning routines. If the PCs camped elsewhere, Cincia sends for them by means of a *silver raven figurine of wondrous power*. She warns them that Vernisant's guards have arrived and started rearranging the museum's main room for some kind of special event. All of the areas with plants are trimmed back to avoid blocking the entrance, and the compound's walls are only 5 feet tall, making excellent perches for viewers. A small crowd has begun to trickle in from the street, and anyone present can explain Vernisant will give a speech shortly to announce a new holiday called "Birthright Day." The PCs have enough time to finish their spell preparations and the like before Cincia ushers them out of the building to join the crowd. There the PCs can spot the shipwright Rasvelg Coalbraid, Magistrate Joleana Tantriano, and Patrician Neffery Adimare. Each greets and might chat with the PCs briefly, depending on whether or not the PCs successfully influenced them. None of them are entirely sure what this new holiday is about, though they speculate the earl's likely to wax poetic about his heroic ancestor in the process.

This encounter assumes that the PCs are in the gathered crowd, from which they can rally support and refute the accusations the earl levels against them and the Society in his upcoming speech. Because it takes a little time to prepare, it's possible that the PCs decide to infiltrate the museum while the earl's hirelings and guards set up for the event. The PCs might even proactively sabotage some part of the announcement, which could lead to their arrest unless they're especially careful; a PC is identified and risks capture unless she succeeds at a DC 18 Disguise or Stealth check (DC 21 in Subtier 4–5). Their actions should provide a +2 or –2 modifier (perhaps a +4 or –4 for something extraordinary) on the skill check to sway the crowd at the end of this social scene. If the PCs perform a tremendously negative action (e.g. set fire to the museum or engage in assassination), the crowd disperses, the guards call for reinforcements, and Vernisant beats a hasty retreat. This outcome might seem like a win, but it almost certainly results in the PCs' arrest and perhaps deportation. What's more, such terrible actions only give Vernisant more political capital and strength. Let the players know that the proposed action could have disastrous consequences for themselves and the Society's reputation. If they proceed, it's okay to end the scenario early and award Chronicle sheets as though the PCs had failed the remaining encounters.

EARL VERNISANT'S SPEECH

As the speech begins, let the PCs place themselves anywhere in the courtyard so long as they're at least 20 feet from the main doors. The earl's guards maintain this perimeter to guard the nobleman from any threats.

Vernisant's plan boils down to three basic steps. First, he intends to build patriotic fervor by celebrating General Arnisant, in the same motion lending himself glory by association. Second, he plans to discredit those who are investigating his misdeeds, specifically the Pathfinders. When he finishes speaking, he wants the public to flood into the museum to witness Taldor's past greatness (as rearranged and augmented by his staff) to reinforce his importance with jingoistic flair.

A small speaking platform has been set up just to the side of the main doors, allowing the public a clear view of the museum's main room. When the speech is about to begin, four guards exit the building to flank the platform. As a quintet of winds and percussion plays an inspired fanfare, the guards pull on several bundles of cloth near the eaves, unfurling long banners of green, blue, and gold. As the banners finish opening, blue and green alchemical smoke pellets activate, releasing plumes of sparking smoke. Earl Calhadion Vernisant strides through the smoke and ascends to the speaking platform, resplendent in a finely cut outfit and basking in the applause.

This scenario breaks Vernisant's speech into several sections, allowing the GM to intersperse the relevant pieces as necessary to accommodate the PCs' earlier actions. This structure also allows a chance for the PCs to refute the earl's accusations, and it allows for key NPCs to speak in the PCs' defense (assuming the PCs successfully influenced those NPCs). Once ready to begin the speech, read or paraphrase the following.

"We stand here to today in recognition of greatness: of Taldor's institutions, of Taldor's people, and the greatness of Taldor itself! Yet our grand empire would not have shaped the world as we know it were it not for sacrifice—the selfless heroism that inspired our neighbors to unite against a common threat, when evil itself threatened to snuff out civilization as we know it. Yes, I speak of the great General Arnisant, my direct ancestor who faced evil head-on and gave his life so that we might live our own. Yes, in Taldor, we respect tradition because it's what made us strong and keeps us strong, and I stand before you today as a living testament that General Arnisant's legacy of selfless and impeccable service lives on, for the glory of Ridonport," the earl pauses as the crowd cheers wildly, "and of Taldor itself! This is our birthright, and today we celebrate our heritage proudly!"

The quintet plays a cheerful tune as the guards motion for applause and the crowd cheers. For effect, Vernisant frowns with pensive concern before motioning for silence and continuing. "Yet there are those who hate our traditions, who loathe what Taldor stands for, and who disparage Arnisant's sacrifice that bought us our freedom." The earl motions for patience as the crowd boos angrily. "Yes, I too was angry when I learned someone might despise Taldor with the same blasphemous hatred that the Whispering Tyrant leveled at our empire when he drew upon his

C. Birthright Day Celebration

1 square = 5 feet

Pathfinder Flip-Mat: Noble Estate

1 square = 5 feet

Pathfinder Flip-Mat: Noble Estate

foul magic and attempted to tear out General Arnisant's heart—just as even now some in Taldor which to shred institutions as sacred as primogeniture that have made us strong!

"And," he notes, raising his hand before leveling it at the Pathfinders, "They infiltrate our ranks even today!"

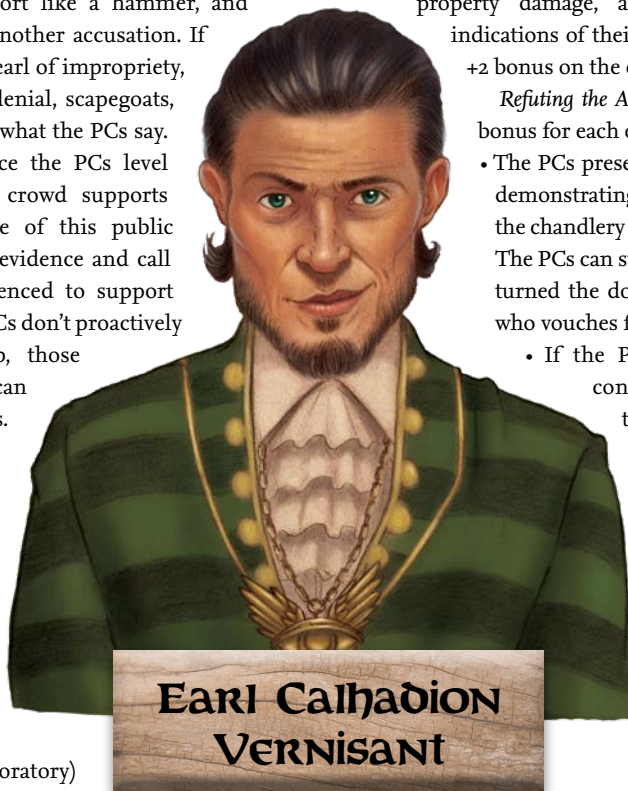
Vernisant's basic tactic involves leveling an accusation, wielding his popular support like a hammer, and then hitting the PCs with another accusation. If the PCs begin accusing the earl of impropriety, he uses a combination of denial, scapegoats, and political spin to deflect what the PCs say. However, the more evidence the PCs level against him, the less the crowd supports Vernisant. Over the course of this public scene, the PCs can present evidence and call upon key NPCs they influenced to support their narrative. Even if the PCs don't proactively ask for these NPCs' help, those who view them favorably can volunteer their perspectives. Ideally, though, let the players dictate the pace and direction of their argument. They're facing down a demagogue with a big audience, and they should feel important.

At the end of this scene, one PC can attempt a DC 30 (DC 33 in Subtier 4–5) Diplomacy, Perform (oratory) check, or Profession (barrister) check, representing the PCs' combined defense to sway the crowd. Award as much as a +4 bonus for good roleplaying. Each PC who presented at least one piece of evidence can attempt the aid another action for this check. If the PCs successfully enacted a particularly creative plan while gaining influence in Ridonport (see page 6), the PC gains an additional +2 bonus on this check, and if they successfully interacted with the painting in the museum (see page 7), she gains an additional +2 bonus. All such bonuses stack.

The following represent Vernisant's three main accusations. Read or paraphrase them in any order, giving the PCs a chance to refute each one. If the PCs completely avoided the chandlery after hours or the canal pirates encounter, skip the burglary or assault accusation entirely as appropriate.

Burglary: Vernisant brings up the PCs trespassing in the chandlery.

"It was these villains who broke into the chandlery, stealing from the very businesses that sustain Ridonport!"



If the PCs fought guards summoned by the alarm or violently subdued the half-orc guard Rusmonya, Vernisant also invokes those incidents as crimes against Ridonport's citizens. If the PCs did so, impose a –2 penalty on their check at the end of this scene (–4 if they killed at least one of these figures). If the PCs performed a very clean infiltration in which they avoided harming anyone, caused no significant property damage, and generally avoided leaving indications of their infiltration, they instead gain a +2 bonus on the check.

Refuting the Accusation: The PCs can gain a +2 bonus for each of the following.

- The PCs present the documents from the safe, demonstrating that Vernisant took control of the chandlery and used it to bribe naval officers. The PCs can still receive this bonus even if they turned the documents over to the magistrate, who vouches for the PCs' claim.
- If the PCs impressed Neffery, he can confirm their story and volunteers that he suggested they search the building.

Vernisant's Response: The earl denies any knowledge of the chandlery's operations, promises an official investigation into the allegation of bribery, and (if pressed) claims he purchased the club as a personal favor to Neffery and is dismayed that Neffery would repay him

by resorting to such underhanded tactics out of jealousy. He moves on as quickly as he can to his next accusation.

Assault: Vernisant cites the PCs' attack on the pirates, though he spins it as an attack on members of the Taldan navy.

"Let us not forget that these scoundrels shed the blood of Taldor's own navy, striking down our nation's finest on their native soil!"

Refuting the Accusation: The PCs can gain a +2 bonus for each of the following.

- The PCs mention any damning details they learned about the pirates, such as that they were navy sailors discharged for theft.
- The PCs present any evidence that the pirates were selectively targeting the shipments of Count Zespire and sending those to a fence in Ridonport.
- If the PCs impressed Rasvelg, he supports the PCs by swearing none of the sailors he works with mentioned a fight that night, so if the PCs did clash with someone, it wasn't with anyone who's part of Taldor's navy. He did

hear that the infamous deserter Gayleigh Knar had finally picked a fight that beast of hers from Osirion couldn't get her out of.

- If the PCs brought any of the pirates back to the magistrate (or have brought one of the pirates to testify), Joleana supports the PCs by identifying the pirates as wanted criminals.

Vernisant's Response: Vernisant declares it's preposterous that pirates would be operating in Ridonport, and he considers the suggestion a personal insult to his administration and the citizens' upstanding moral fiber. If the PCs captured any of the pirates and convinced them to talk to the magistrate, Vernisant suggests the Pathfinders have intimidated their captives into providing a false confession. He moves on as quickly as he can to accusing the PCs of being spies.

Espionage: Vernisant accuses the PCs of being devious spies and saboteurs.

"My people, let us not forget the lessons of Mendev's third crusade, when invading demons infiltrated the heroes' ranks to spread misery, misinformation, and misfortune. So to do these foreign menaces spy on us and turn us against one another, hoping that we might destroy each other. We must stand together to be strong!"

Refuting the Accusation: The PCs can gain a +2 bonus for each of the following.

- The PCs refute this by presenting their deputation papers that Joleana signed, authorizing them to hunt pirates.
- If the PCs impressed Cincia, she supports them by identifying them as scholars that she invited to Ridonport to help with the museum.
- If the PCs impressed Joleana, she supports them by explaining that the PCs were acting lawfully as part of her ongoing investigations into the canals' piracy.

Vernisant's Response: Vernisant says he's disappointed that so many seem to have been taken in by the political conspiracy against him, but that he is the only one who can lead Ridonport, and he is prepared to prove it.

Development: Once Vernisant has made his accusations and the PCs have responded, the crowd grows restless. Have a PC attempt the DC 30 (DC 33 in Subtier 4–5) Diplomacy, Perform (oratory) check, or Profession (barrister) check referenced at the beginning of this scene. If the PC succeeds, the crowd sides with the Pathfinders and against Earl Calhadion Vernisant; move immediately to the Spoils of Gallowspire encounter below. If the PC fails by 4 or less, the crowd disapproves of both the Pathfinders and the earl; move to the Spoils of Gallowspire encounter, but note this outcome for calculating the PCs' success conditions.

If the PCs fail by 5 or more, Vernisant has successfully maintained control of the crowd, and he directs them to

"show these miscreants how Taldor treats its enemies."

At this point, the PCs have failed this scene, but they can participate in the scenario's final scene at a disadvantage later. The exact details of how this failure condition plays out aren't critical so long as the PCs have the opportunity to finish the scenario after suffering some embarrassment and/or near-death experience. For example, the riotous crowd might tar and feather the PCs, taunt them with accusations of being "Eagle Knights" (accompanied by mocking chicken clucking sounds), and then threaten to throw the PCs into the Inner Sea to let them swim home.

Ultimately, Joleana and other levelheaded officials manage to break up the shameful act of mob justice and ensure the PCs don't experience any lasting harm. In the meantime, though, Vernisant has cracked open the dangerous crate in the Spoils of Gallowspire encounter, unleashing evil beings. He escapes, leaving his guards to handle the mess. Cincia also escapes, though she does so to find the PCs and explain what happened. The PCs can then proceed to that encounter with only Cincia in tow, though when they arrive, three of the guards are dead, and the last one is desperately holding the main doors closed. As the PCs arrive, a rush of spectral energy blasts the doors open, unleashing the undead threats.

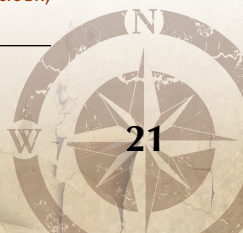
SPOILS OF GALLOWSPIRE

When the crowd turns against Earl Calhadion Vernisant, he attempts to win them over with a dramatic show and reminder of his ancestor's greatness.

"People of Ridonport," the earl proudly pleads, backing into the museum's main room as the crowd advanced menacingly. "Your actions bring shame to our port's greatest hero. When I looked through this museum's collections, I found a mighty artifact hidden from view since 3827—as if we were ever ashamed of our heritage. Do not jeer at me, for I am about to reclaim a relic used by my ancestor and bring glory back to Ridonport!"

Vernisant motions to one of the attendants, who pulls a blue cloth off of a heavy chest. The word "Gallowspire" runs diagonally across its surface in peeling paint. The earl places a hand on the chest and announces, "Let us see what treasures the past has promised." As if responding to his voice or his touch, the chests numerous locks all click open. Vernisant's smirk turns to a look of confusion as the lid flies open and a wave of palpable menace rushes out. As it passes over the suits of armor on display, they animate and begin menacing the crowd. At the same time, a pair of gauntlets leaps out at one of the guards, choking the life from him.

Other haunted relics begin rising from the crate as a spectral voice bellows, "We can sense you, General, and we can sense your people. We shall destroy them all as a reminder that none ever mock the Whispering Tyrant, Tar-Baphon!" In response, Calhadion Vernisant takes a fearful step back, swishes his cloak, and disappears in a cloud of blue-and-green smoke.



Scaling Encounter C

Make the following adjustments to accommodate a group of four PCs.

Subtier 1-2: Remove one hollow helm from the encounter.

Subtier 4-5: Remove one crusader phantom armor from the encounter.

Hazard: As the undead break out, the crowd panics and tries to flee. This causes all of the marked squares in the courtyard to become difficult terrain. A PC who begins her turn in or enters this area must succeed at a DC 10 Reflex save or take 1d3 points of nonlethal damage from the jostling crowd. In Subtier 4-5, increase the DC to 13 and the damage to 1d6+2.

As a full-round action, a PC can attempt a DC 15 Diplomacy or Intimidate check to direct the crowd's evacuation. If successful, the crowd does not deal any damage until the end of that PC's next turn. Furthermore, one PC of that character's choice can move through the crowd as though it were not difficult terrain until the end of the directing PC's next turn. For every 5 by which the PC's Diplomacy or Intimidate result exceeds this DC, one additional PC can move through the crowd unimpeded. If a PC uses a potent crowd-controlling spell like *enthrall*, allow them to attempt a check to direct the crowd with a +10 bonus. Such spells might also allow the PC to exert control for more than 1 round.

At the beginning of the second round and each round thereafter, 1d10+10 squares of this difficult terrain clear out, beginning with those squares closest to the main doors into the museum, as the crowd successfully makes its way away from the museum.

Creatures: Although it's unclear quite what resided within this heavy crate, in being released it has animated several of the relics inside and several of the museum pieces in the main room. All of these are haunted, making them function like undead, even though there are only fragile scraps of hair, skin, and bone surviving within any of the objects. Furthermore, the PCs face only some of these threats directly, for Vernisant's guards and the key NPCs the PCs might have influenced earlier contribute to fighting off other haunted threats in the background. In Subtier 1-2, these NPCs fend off the animated suits of armor, leaving the PCs to fight the animated gauntlets and helms. In Subtier 4-5, the roles reverse.

Although these NPC don't necessarily appear on the combat map, each one that the PCs successfully influenced can provide momentary aid once during the encounter. A PC can call for this immediate help as a swift action.

Cincia: Cincia casts *protection from evil* (CL 1st) on one PC.

Rasvelg: Rasvelg successfully uses the aid another action to increase one PC's AC or attack against a target.

Joleana: Joleana channels positive energy (1d6, DC 13) to harm two undead targets. In Subtier 4-5, increase the damage to 2d6 and the DC to 14.

Neffery: Neffery moves to flank with one PC for 1 round.

SUBTIER 1-2 (CR 3)

HOLLOW GAUNTLETS (2)

CR 1/2

Variant crawling hand (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 2 59; see page 26)

AC 16, touch 14, flat-footed 14 (+2 armor, +4 size)

hp 9 each

HOLLOW HELMS (2)

CR 1/2

hp 9 each (*Pathfinder Adventure Path* #47 *Ashes at Dawn* 84; see page 26)

SUBTIER 4-5 (CR 6)

CRUSADER PHANTOM ARMORS (3)

CR 3

Guardian phantom armor fighter 1 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 4 213)

NE Medium undead

Init +4; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +8

DEFENSE

AC 21, touch 10, flat-footed 21 (+9 armor, +2 shield)

hp 28 (3d8+1d10+9)

Fort +5, **Ref** +1, **Will** +4

Defensive Abilities channel resistance +2; **Immune** undead traits

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee mwk falcata +8 (1d8+4/19-20/x3) or
slam +7 (1d4+4)

STATISTICS

Str 18, **Dex** 11, **Con** —, **Int** 9, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 14

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +7; **CMD** 17

Feats Exotic Weapon Proficiency (falcata), Improved Initiative,
Power Attack

Skills Intimidate +8, Perception +8, Stealth +5

Languages Common (can't speak)

SQ freeze (suit of armor)

Gear mwk heavy steel shield, mwk falcata^{APG}

Treasure: Many of the relics inside the crate are destroyed during the combat. However, among the remaining gear is a weathered wooden scabbard that's suitable for a heavy blade. Its bronze mouthpiece bears the combined imagery of the Eye of Aroden above a bristling badger, and with a DC 18 Knowledge (history or nobility) check, a PC can recognize this as the insignia of the Argent Blaze, a short-lived knighthood from Absalom that formed to fight in the Shining Crusade. It's believed that every one of them perished in a counterattack that helped General Arnisant reach the Whispering Tyrant and end the war. In Subtier 1-2, this is a *scabbard of vigor*^{APG} that can also add the *undead*

bane special ability to the affected weapon by reducing the bestowed enhancement bonus by +1 (e.g., a +2 *undead bane weapon* for 3 rounds). In Subtier 4–5, this is instead a *scabbard of many blades*^{ACG} that also stores a +3 *undead bane longsword* that can only be drawn once and disappears forever 10 minutes later. This longsword is also decorated with Arodenite and badger imagery.

Rewards: If the PCs do not defeat the undead, reduce each PC's gold earned as follows.

Subtier 1–2: Reduce each PC's gold earned by 150 gp.

Out-of-Subtier: Reduce each PC's gold earned by 325 gp.

Subtier 4–5: Reduce each PC's gold earned by 500 gp.

CONCLUSION

Once the PCs defeat the hostile spirits animating the armor and relics, the key NPCs help reestablish order, tend to the wounded, and thank the PCs for their help. Cincia does not know where Earl Calhaddon Vernisant acquired the Gallowspire chest, but she's both excited and worried about the implications that the General Arnisant collection has discoveries such as these that might be hiding elsewhere on the premises. She asks that the Society send an occultist or other magically adept agent to help her search for forgotten treasures that the general and his family might have hidden away. Rasvelg takes an active hand in cleaning up any debris, mentioning that he feels sorry for Vernisant's guards and noting with disappointment that they had to be rescued from a pair of gloves. Neffery is beaming from having defended Ridonport with his own hands, noting that his childhood fencing lessons truly paid off. Finally, Joleana replaces her holy symbol and remarks that she was worried she'd become "too old for this sort of thing," though she won't retire so long as the people of Ridonport need her.

All of these NPCs are disappointed in the earl's behavior, and it's clear the crowd feels the same way. Within 24 hours, hundreds of Ridonport's concerned citizens surround the earl's manor and demand answers for what he did. For a time, it seems as though he's shouting from inside to negotiate some kind of truce. However, a wainwright spots the earl trying to sneak out of his estate by climbing down a chimney, only for the nobleman to slip and tear his jacket. In the weeks that follow, the Tandak prefecture is ablaze with gleeful stories about how a soot-smearing Vernisant fled with only one boot astride a stolen draft horse. Vernisant quickly finds his way to Oppara, where he seeks refuge among Grand Prince Stavian III's loyalists. Even there, he's followed by questions of why he allowed piracy in his region and why he was soliciting bribes from navy officers, leading to a formal censure issued by the senate and barring him from voting in the upcoming primogeniture decision.

The above does, though, assume that the PCs either secured the crowd's support or prevented the earl from asserting total control. If the PCs failed their check to influence the

crowd by 5 or more and suffered some indignity, most of the key NPCs likely never fought the undead. What's more, Taldor tells the stories of the earl's laughable escape in the same breath that they regale others about how the Pathfinder Society made fools of themselves (again, as especially mean-spirited raconteurs are quick to add). Despite this setback, Vernisant eventually returns to Ridonport to reclaim his old responsibilities and swear vengeance against the Society.

Either way, Venture-Captain Muesello is ready to debrief the PCs in Oppara. He listens to the PCs' report with interest, afterward sharing that he received two different letters. The one from Cincia Reviamo applauds the PCs' assistance and notes that with the earl no longer meddling, she's been able to begin restoration of the museum. If the PCs successfully influenced her, she adds that she's commissioned a brass plaque that commemorates the PCs' bravery to defend both Ridonport and the true legacy of General Arnisant; each PC earns the Arnisant Museum Patron boon on his Chronicle sheet. The other letter is from Count Orlundo Zespire, in which he expresses his gratitude for both resolving his canal piracy problem and humbling Earl Vernisant.

Beyond that, Muesello conveys that Lady Morilla and her allies are already acting on the PCs' recent accomplishments. He muses that there might be big changes coming in Taldor, and he encourages the PCs to be ready in case they wish to continue making history, not just uncovering it.

REPORTING NOTES

If the PCs successfully swayed the crowd during the Earl Vernisant's Speech encounter, check box A on the reporting sheet. If the PCs successfully influenced Cincia, check box B. If the PCs successfully influenced at least two of the three other key NPCs, check box C. If Vernisant took control of the crowd, leading to the PCs' embarrassing punishment, check box D.

PRIMARY SUCCESS CONDITIONS

The PCs' primary goals in this scenario are making a good impression and stopping the canal piracy. So long as the PCs both defeat the pirates in area B and either succeed at the skill check to sway the crowd or only fail it by 4 or less, each PC earns 1 Prestige Point.

SECONDARY SUCCESS CONDITIONS

To fulfill their secondary goals, the PCs must fulfill four of the following five conditions: successfully influence Cincia, successfully influence Rasvelg, successfully influence Joleana, successfully influence Neffery, and succeed at the skill check to sway the crowd during Vernisant's speech. Doing so earns each PC 1 additional Prestige Point.

FACTION NOTES

This scenario plays heavily into the Sovereign Court



PATHFINDER SOCIETY SCENARIO

faction's interests, and members of this faction must endeavor to win Ridonport's and Count Zespire's support while revealing Earl Vernisant as a recklessly criminal

noble. By fulfilling the primary and secondary success conditions, Sovereign Court faction PCs each earn the Rising Star boon.



Handout #1

During *Birthright Betrayed*, the PCs interact with and try to impress four key NPCs. The table below lists which skills the PCs can use to impress these NPCs and the associated DC for each skill check. Note that all of the DCs listed below are increased by 2 in Subtier 4–5. Any skill DC marked with an asterisk (*) applies to only one type of that skill, such as Perform (comedy).

Skill	Cincia	Rasvelg	Joleana	Neffery
Bluff	15			12
Craft		12		12*
Diplomacy	15	16	15	16
Knowledge (engineering)		13		
Knowledge (geography)	12			
Knowledge (history)	12		13	
Knowledge (local)	12	13		
Knowledge (nobility)	12			12
Knowledge (religion)			13	
Perform			18*	
Profession		12	12*	

To influence an NPC, the PCs must succeed at two skill checks before failing two checks.

Handout #2

Reminder to self: To ensure its contents remain secure, the combination to the safe has changed.

Further reminder: Clean the chandlery for the upcoming anniversary of General Arnisant's heroic death. It has been 890 years now—a very significant date. One can't help but wonder that Ridonport's people and its earl might be especially sentimental.



APPENDIX: STAT BLOCKS

The following stat blocks appear in this scenario.

CRAWLING HAND

With a jolt, this severed hand springs to life, its fingers propelling it forth at great speed like a deformed spider.

CRAWLING HAND	CR 1/2
<i>Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2 59</i>	
NE Diminutive undead	
Init +0; Senses blindsense 30 ft., darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +4	
DEFENSE	
AC 14, touch 14, flat-footed 14 (+4 size)	
hp 9 (1d8+5)	
Fort +2, Ref +0, Will +2	
Immune undead traits	
OFFENSE	
Speed 40 ft., climb 40 ft.	
Melee claw +5 (1d1+1 plus grab)	
Space 1 ft., Reach 0 ft.	
STATISTICS	
Str 13, Dex 11, Con —, Int 2, Wis 11, Cha 14	
Base Atk +0; CMB –4 (+0 grapple); CMD 7	
Feats Toughness	
Skills Climb +9, Perception +4, Stealth +12, Survival +4; Racial	
Modifiers +4 Survival	
Languages Common (can't speak)	
SPECIAL ABILITIES	
Grab (Ex) A crawling hand can use its grab ability on a creature of up to Medium size.	

HOLLOW HELM

This floating helmet has faintly glowing eyes that glow with malevolence.

HOLLOW HELM	CR 1
<i>Pathfinder Adventure Path #47: Ashes at Dawn 84</i>	
NE Tiny undead	
Init +5; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +5	
DEFENSE	
AC 16, touch 13, flat-footed 15 (+1 Dex, +3 natural, +2 size)	
hp 9 (2d8)	
Fort +0, Ref +1, Will +3	
Defensive Abilities channel resistance +2; Immune undead traits	
OFFENSE	
Speed 20 ft., fly 30 ft. (perfect)	
Melee slam +4 (1d4+1)	
Special Attacks skull cage	
STATISTICS	
Str 12, Dex 13, Con —, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 10	
Base Atk +1; CMB +0; CMD 11 (can't be tripped)	

Feats Improved Initiative⁸

Skills Perception +5, Stealth +12

Languages Common (can't speak)

SQ freeze (suit of armor)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Freeze (Ex) A hollow helm can hold itself so still it appears to be a normal suit of armor. A hollow helm that uses freeze can take 20 on its Stealth check to hide in plain sight, disguised as normal armor.

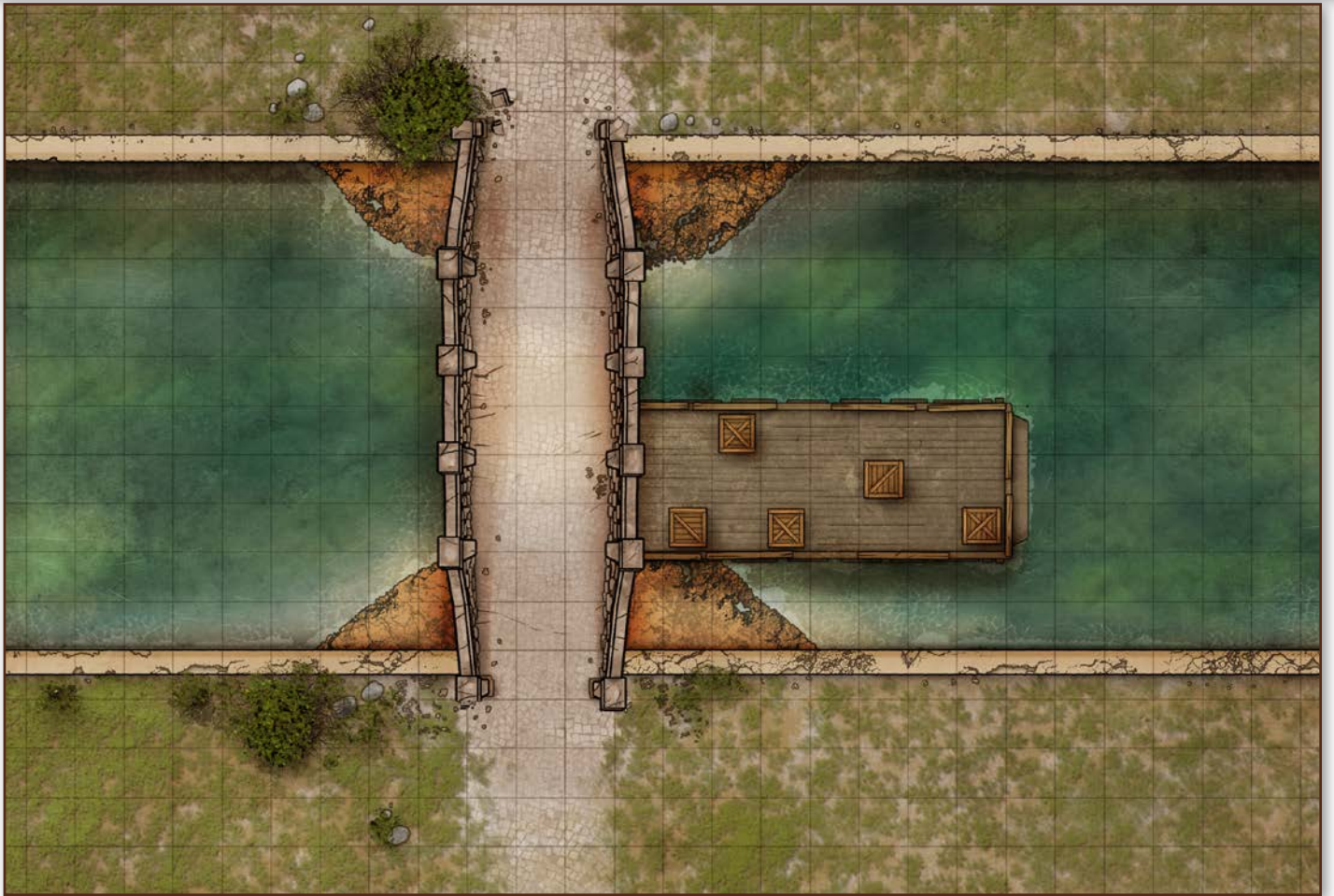
Skull Cage (Ex) A hollow helm sometimes pretends to be normal armor, letting a creature try to wear it before revealing its deadly nature. If the hollow helm makes a successful combat maneuver to grapple an opponent of Medium size or smaller, the grappled creature is also blinded. Creatures that purposefully try to wear a hollow helm are automatically grappled. This blindness lasts until the hollow helm's grapple is broken. A hollow helm cannot attack a creature it is grappling. If a hollow helm is damaged while it is grappling, the creature it is grappling takes an equal amount of damage.

SHIP IN A BOTTLE

A model sailing ship in a display bottle the size of a boot sails the air on vaporous waves. Speckles of water move about the deck like a crew, arming a miniature ballista and preparing to take aim.

SHIP IN A BOTTLE	CR 2
<i>Pathfinder Adventure Path #57: Tempest Rising 86</i>	
N Tiny construct	
Init +6; Senses darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +0	
DEFENSE	
AC 15, touch 14, flat-footed 13 (+1 armor, +2 Dex, +2 size)	
hp 16 (3d10)	
Fort +1, Ref +3, Will +1	
DR 5/bludgeoning; Immune construct traits	
OFFENSE	
Speed fly 40 ft. (perfect)	
Melee ram +6 (1d3+1)	
Ranged ballista +7 (1d6)	
STATISTICS	
Str 12, Dex 15, Con —, Int 5, Wis 10, Cha 13	
Base Atk +3; CMB +2; CMD 14 (can't be tripped)	
Feats Flyby Attack, Improved Initiative	
Skills Fly +20	
Languages Aquan, Common (can't speak any language)	
SQ shatter spray	
SPECIAL ABILITIES	
Shatter Spray (Ex) The first time a ship in a bottle fires its ballista, rams a creature, or is dealt weapon damage, the bottle containing it shatters, spraying glass in a circle around it. All creatures in a 5-foot radius take 1d6 points of piercing damage. A successful DC 12 Reflex save halves this additional damage.	

BIRTHRIGHT BETRAYED



PATHFINDER SOCIETY SCENARIO

Pathfinder Society Scenario #9-08: Birthright Betrayed

Event

Date

GM #

GM Character #

GM Name

GM Prestige Earned

☐ Dark Archive
☐ Scarab Sages
☐ A

☐ Silver Crusade
☐ The Exchange
☐ B

☐ Sovereign Court
☐ Grand Lodge
☐ C

☐ Liberty's Edge
☐ D

Character #

Prestige Points

Character Name

☐ Dark Archive
☐ Scarab Sages

☐ The Exchange
☐ Silver Crusade

☐ Grand Lodge
☐ Sovereign Court

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